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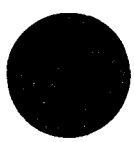

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Volume 35 *Winter, 1965-66* Number 1

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the scholar cornered

Humanism in 1984

> Authors communicate with the people by some special extrinsic mark; I am the first to do so by my entire being, as Michel de Montaigne, not as a grammarian or a poet or a jurist. If the world complains that I speak too much of myself, I complain that it does not even think of itself.
>
> Montaigne, *On Repentance*

A character in a recent play on Broadway says at one point: "Humanism was destroyed, with much else, at Hiroshima." I doubt it. Humanism has had more than one life, more than one shape, many meanings; and it is still being invoked not only seriously but—for better or worse—traditionally.

In Webster's New International, the first three meanings of humanism are:

1. Human nature or disposition; humanity.

2. The study of the humanities; polite learning; esp., the learning, or cultural impulse, imparted by those who brought the Greek and Roman classics into new vogue during the Renaissance.

3. A system, mode, or attitude of thought or action centering upon distinctively human interests or ideals, esp. as contrasted with naturalistic or religious interests.

But there is still another meaning that history has added to these. I have heard Columbia University's great classical scholar, Moses Hadas, speak about the humanist's concern for achievement and fame, about his emphasis on the signature—and how this need to leave one's mark, as a surrogate for immortality, reemerged in the early Renaissance with the revival of the humanistic tradition. His words evoked for me that often cited tale of Michelangelo returning by night to St. Peter's to pound out with hammer and chisel on the belt of the Mother of Christ the words *"Michelangelo Buonarroti fecit."* . . .

For me two central concepts of humanism emerge from the many definitions and interpretations available. One is the concept of a great tradition undergoing changes (I think for instance of the wedding, in the later Renaissance, of Christian dogma and thinking with humanist thinking and action)—undergoing changes, yes, but maintaining a continuity combining an emphasis on antiquity and language with a sense of the ultimate worthwhileness of human life and striving. The other concept begins with the need for self-respect as an ethical rudder, and leads to a stress on individuality, on self-knowledge, on finding and being oneself. Fraser Darling, the British ecologist, once said to me (rejecting all the usual invocations to man's thumb, to his gift for laughter, to his capacity for reason) that he believed that man differed from the other animals primarily in his sense of *discreteness.*

Finally, rather warily, I would suggest that the humanistic sense of a tradition of continuity in the aspirations of humanity is a thoroughly socialized ideal, while the emphasis on individuality is not so surely so. Properly balanced and blended, the public man and the private man may come together in an individual at once aware of his discreteness and deeply concerned with

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leaving his signature on time, while also dedicated in his own way to the public good and to the great human enterprise.

So much for an introduction. What I am really concerned with in this essay is to explore—necessarily tentatively, necessarily inadequately—a little way into the question brought to mind by the opening reference to Hiroshima.

Here, now, at this point in time and space, is humanism a valid philosophical position? Is it a workable guide in the conduct of one's life? What meaning can it have for us now? And finally, after a century of (often incidental) undermining of the humanist faith by brilliant thinkers and innovators of all sorts—in what new forms (if any) may a valid humanism be cast? . . .

A year or so before he died, Van Wyck Brooks said to a friend, "We are still standing in the gray dawn of the age of character." There are many who feel, instead, that we are standing in the iron dusk of the age of character, as well as facing the night of extinction. Is it possible now, in this nuclear age of Spastic Man, to be a practicing humanist without going through empty rituals, praying to dead gods, resolutely facing away from proved realities?

To find out, even tentatively, we must face the prevalent scientific concepts of man, and the discontents of our civilization, in a society and a world really astonishingly similar (at least in spirit, in tone and flavor) to those foreseen sometime ago by Aldous Huxley and George Orwell—a world in which the H-bomb is just over the nearest hill in one or another plane, automation is in multiple saddles, and a good many of us have been told enough about our insides to wish not to examine them further. The H-bomb's great cloud is the dominant symbol of our world, however much we choose not to think about it consciously. Is it pertinent, in the face of the processes and institutions of our time that many of us find dehumanizing, and this threat of extinction, and remembering Moses Hadas' comments on humanism, to consider the astronauts—American or Soviet—in their defiant thrusts toward another world, as the first humanists of outer space? . . .

What of the society (I am thinking primarily now of American society, and to some extent that of Western Europe) that spreads beneath that great shadow? It is a society in which violence and cruelty and vindictiveness flare up openly every day, yet in which the majority are constantly being reminded of their meek acquiescence to conformity, their passive acceptance of standardization, and their loss of their individual identities in the great mass. And the high velocity of the sweeping changes modern science has effected in our ways of thinking about reality have all but broken the chain that links the humanist to the past.

It is a society, moreover, in which people stand by watching a gang of thugs beat up or knife and sometimes kill a person—their position presumably being that nothing alien is human to them. This is something new, at least in degree—born, I think, of a more complete and widespread cynicism, fear and hopelessness than one finds in the history of *organized* brutality. Its active counterpart is the jeering and the cries of "jump, jump" not infrequently heard in recent years when some pitiable person climbs out on a window ledge, half-bent on self-destruction, half on exhibitionism. The passive phase is just watching. It gives off a sense of paralysis of feelings—feelings frozen so deep that a perverse stimulation of the senses must take their place.

A related phenomenon, it seems to me, is the widespread invasion, in moving pictures, in advertising, in magazines and books, of frantically titillating sexual material. The advertising of films, especially, seems already to have run the full course of "ordinary" heterosexual exhibitionism, and is now concentrating on sadism and fifty-seven kinds of perversion. And no longer does the advertising exceed the scenes in the film. It is as though once the lid is off, more and more heat must be applied to the kettle to evoke greater and greater clouds of steam. Escalation!

I think too of the so-called "sick" enter-

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tainers, one of whom has at last been sentenced for the public practice of obscenities. I think of *Dr. Strangelove* and of *Candy* and of *Lolita*—about whose literary distinction I hold a dissenting opinion. In each case, I find the writer's intent ambiguous. An underself has taken over somewhere along the line.

But I have been concentrating so far on the gigglers, the kidders, the practitioners of dark laughter, the peepers, the frozen spectators. Their reverse side appears in the wild far-out recklessness and destructiveness of juvenile gangs in our large cities and elsewhere, in vicious attacks on men and women of peace, justified only by racial prejudice.

I have been considering, hurriedly and sketchily, those elements in our society that anyone with even an amateur observer's eye might note. Its more complex structures are more seriously disturbing. Most of them have been discussed at great length in newspapers, periodicals, and on the air; I shall simply list some: the threat of extended open civil strife over racial differences; the appalling pockets of poverty in a conspicuously wealthy society, the all but overwhelming failure to reach and care for, educationally, hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of intelligent and even brilliant children and young people; the frightening statistics on mental health (the mentally retarded, alone, in the United States number five million six hundred thousand); the venality in government, both federal and local, and in our expense-account business society; the failure of the mass media, with few exceptions, to meet the challenge of their great opportunities; the dangers implicit in the rise of automation and the resultant vastly increased amount of leisure time, for people who, it is to be feared, will not know how to use it.

What has happened to man—to the traditional concept of man, the son of God? Or of man, the thinking reed?

Not so many years ago B. F. Skinner epitomized the behavioristic psychologist's vision of man the manipulable in his *Walden II*. By now, his vision seems almost pastoral. And in this context we must examine some of the recent scientific concepts of man, if we are to evaluate the possibility of a humanist ethic.

In his book, *The Human Use of Human Beings*, the late Norbert Wiener (the father of cybernetics) explains three ideas crucial to an understanding of the world as the mathematical physicist sees it.*

The first idea is that of probability. He begins by asking the reader to substitute "probability" thinking for "cause-and-effect" thinking. Cause-and-effect thinking asserts that the total situation of the universe at the present moment completely determines the total situation of the universe at the next moment and *implies* that if we knew all about the universe at the present moment we would know exactly what to expect the next moment.

But, of course, we don't know all about the universe at the present moment. Indeed, what we do know is so infinitesimally small that it amounts to practically nothing. So, says Mr. Wiener, the old cause-and-effect thinking is actually an assertion of faith, not anything that ever can be demonstrated, not scientifically useful.

Probability thinking, on the other hand, says that given this and that information about the present moment, the most reasonable thing to expect of the next moment is such and such.

The second concept Wiener has to establish is that of entropy. Probability is a mathematical concept, derived from statistics. Entropy comes from physics. It is the assertion—established logically and experimentally—that the universe, by its nature, is "running down," moving toward a state of inert uniformity, devoid of form, pattern, hierarchy or differentiation.

That is, in any given situation, less organization, more chaos, is overwhelmingly more probable than tighter organization or more order.

* I am much indebted, in the following synopsis, to Bergen Evans' review of Wiener's book in the Sunday Chicago *Tribune*. His analysis seemed to me outstandingly lucid, much superior to one I was struggling with.

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The tendency for entropy to increase in isolated systems is expressed in the second law of thermodynamics—perhaps, says Wiener, the most pessimistic formulation in all human thought.

It applies, however, to a closed system, to something that is an isolated whole, not just a part. Within such systems there may be parts, which draw their energy from the whole, which are moving, at least temporarily, in the opposite direction; in them order is increasing and chaos is diminishing.

The whirlpools that swirl in a direction opposed to the main current are called "enclaves." And one of them is life, especially human life, Wiener thinks, which in a universe moving inexorably toward chaos moves toward increased order.

But let us see what sort of order. The third concept—feedback—comes from mechanics. Everybody knows that our new wonder-working machines take in data, operate on it according to predetermined principles, and give out the right answer. And, what's more, they do it with a speed utterly impossible to unaided human skill, so that they can solve in a few seconds problems that might require many human lifetimes to work out without their aid.

The speed of operation is not feedback, but feedback uses the speed in a way that has moved machines into practically a new dimension of utility. Feedback is a mechanism whereby the machine observes its own success or failure and alters its next act accordingly.

That is to say, we have invented machines that can "learn by experience" and can communicate with each other. And that brings them impressively close to living organisms, to human beings. All these machines have purpose; that is built into them from their beginnings. The only quality that human beings have that the machines don't have, the argument runs, is the possibility of setting their own purposes. And one does not have to be very cynical to ask how many human beings have exercised, or at least consistently exercise, the possibility?

Having established these concepts, Wiener goes on to discuss the great problems of ethics, biology, law, politics, theology—in these new terms. Wiener presents humanistic problems in mathematical-physical terms. In so doing, he wants to show that they *could* be presented this way and that, therefore, they *could* be put to the machines.

Man the machine? Or machine the man? Perhaps the *manchine*.

For we seem caught between the future (the machine) and the deep past (the predatory animal).

The discoveries and resultant conjectures of two British anthropologists, Raymond Dart and L. S. B. Leakey, have led to the emergence on the contemporary scene of *Australopithecus africanus,* first discovered on the edge of the Kalahari Desert in 1924. There has followed a book by Robert Ardrey, entitled *African Genesis: A Personal Investigation into the Animal Origins and Nature of Man. Australopithecus africanus* has been established, to Mr. Ardrey's satisfaction, with Raymond Dart his authority, as the last direct ancestor of man, and a killer.

Mr. Ardrey calls us "Cain's children." "Man is a predator whose natural instinct is to kill with a weapon," he writes. "The sudden addition of the enlarged brain to the equipment of an armed, already successful predatory animal created not only the human being but also the human predicament." One remembers Thomas Hobbes and *homo homini lupus*—but Mr. Ardrey has substantial scientific backing for his version. He has a flamboyant flair for the dramatic, and overwrites, but his argument in *African Genesis* is impressive. The discovery of *Australopithecus africanus* seems to him to destroy what he calls man's Illusion of Central Position as effectively as Copernicus once did in another sense. He believes that this discovery finally rules out what he calls the Romantic Fallacy, which he defines "as the central conviction of modern thought that all human behavior, with certain clearly stated exceptions [he has in mind the will to survive, the compulsions of

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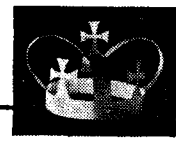

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sex, and the ties of family] . . . results from causes lying within the human experience."

Why? What does he mean?

> In the first evolutionary hour of the human emergence [Mr. Ardrey writes], we became sufficiently skilled in the use of weapons to render redundant our natural primate daggers, our canine teeth. . . . I regard it as anything but a coincidence that the rate of civilization's rise corresponds so closely with man's ascendant capacity to kill. Civilization is a compulsory consequence of our killing imperative; the one could not exist without the other.

Mr. Ardrey finds the most basic drives of man to be predatoriness, the defense of his own territory, and a deep recognition of the pecking order, an inbuilt imperative to dominance. He declares that before we can hope to mend our pitiful state, we must (it is a statement of Nietzschean grandeur that also parallels Mr. Wiener's mathematical humanism) establish a new morality, public and private, that rejects that Romantic Fallacy and the Illusion of Central Position, and bases itself on animal man.

Throughout my reading of *African Genesis,* I had time and again that experience of painfully solid impact that we call "recognition." Yes, I thought over and over, all this is true. But I also thought, this is not all of the truth. There are, I think, strong balancing factors, and indeed a good many anthropologists do not accept these interpretations.

Yet for my purpose in this paper, it is imperative to plunge into the blackest possibilities, and I emerged from these waters thoroughly chilled. . . .

It is perhaps not simply the ascendancy of psychoanalysis that has led us, in facile everyday conversations, as well as in learned or semilearned papers, to replace "good" and "evil," as key ethical and evaluative words, with "well" and "sick." Nor is this new—witness the Biblical "There is an Evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is heavy upon men: a man to whom God giveth riches, wealth and honor, so that he lacketh nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but an alien eateth it; this is vanity, and it is an evil disease."

Only now, the concept is ubiquitous. . . . If we may believe some of the brilliant leaders in the "new" sciences of man, civilized man is on his way to becoming the only generically sick animal—for whom health, as traditionally conceived, is a mutant. . . .

At any rate, I am asking: Is there, in the face of all I have been describing, a workable *humanist* morality, way of life? And, sequentially (although I cannot deal with it in this essay), is there a solid place for the humanities, whether or not traditionally interpreted, in the crucially important educational programs and institutions of today?

I cannot hope to do more here than tentatively point a direction or two.

The humanities have no comprehensive body of objective knowledge provable mathematically or by controlled experiment. If, then, the humanist attempts to establish an ethic at once humanistic and pragmatically valid, he turns in one of two directions, or both: 1) the lessons to be found in the texts of the past, and 2)—as René Dubos puts it—"Life as response, life as experience." Whose response? Whose experience? Those of the individual himself. And that is my chief concern in this essay.

Is self-knowledge accessible to the contemporary person I have called Spastic Man? Spastic, because with the exception of single, inconclusive encounters, I have met no live human being without tensions, conflicts and tics—whether visible or clearly implied. I have found no one at peace, at rest—no one in sustained equilibrium. Most of the people I have known at all well have carried so heavy a cargo of these tensions that I do not see how we survive the days of our years.

But I specified a *live* human being because it is clear to me that many, perhaps most, people are not alive in the sense in which I am using the word, and hence may give the illusion of calm. Alive? That is: fully aware of the civil wars within oneself, trying to deal with them and those animal compulsions of which Mr. Ardrey speaks, seeking (because for him, whichever individual, this is what it means to be a man)

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as much self-knowledge as one can absorb and use toward fulfillment.

One can often recognize those who have given up the battle. Having found their conflicts, their impulsions in two or more directions at once, unbearable, they have withdrawn from the participation that I have been describing. Their eyes are opaque, there is a special air of coolness, remoteness, about them; they are the mechanical men of the future, thinking but not being able to identify—or to identify with —their own feelings. These are to me the most obviously defeated. And ironically, their distance often enables them to be very objective and wise about all but their own problems.

But there are other sorts of men who have also given up the search, and unless you come to know them quite well you would think them among the happiest of mortals. There is, for instance, the self-distracter, who skims merrily along the surface of life like a hummingbird or a dragonfly.

He distracts himself to keep, on the one hand, from being aware of the tensions that are inevitable for the *live* man, and to keep from looking, unblinking, into the depths of self—his origins and his potentialities. Eventually novelty becomes the goal of his life. He must move from place to place, from occupation to occupation, always in search of the new.

But the person who most successfully evades the whole problem I think of as the egoist, defined by Webster's New International (in that traditionally helpful way of dictionaries) as one given overmuch to egoism. Egoism, however, *is* defined—as "excessive love and thought of self; the habit of regarding oneself as the center of every interest." The egoist, then, smothers our problems. He is, almost to the point of solipsism, a successful narcissist. He is seldom aggressive or boastful, but he is so fully in love with, absorbed in, himself that whenever someone else is really hostile to him, or even indifferent, he either does not recognize it, or is astonished. Most of the time he unconsciously takes it for granted that everyone else is enjoying him as much as he enjoys himself. Indeed, he is not always sure that there *is* anyone else—until he needs reassurance, as he does desperately from time to time. Cut off his source of supply then, and he is lost, trapped, suicidal. . . . There are other varieties of the unalive, but these must suffice for now.

But who then is the *live* person? He whom I would term the conscious man, the man who is determined to *find out* (I cannot stress enough the centrality of those simple words); to endure as best he can the pain of being a man; to discover the joy of being a man; to live fully his own experience.

Easy to say, hard to come by. There are several great passages in Bergson's *Creative Mind*, as majestic to me as the best of Lucretius or Dante, and they are pertinent to what I am trying to say:

> But nowhere is the substantiality of change so visible, so palpable as in the domain of the inner life. Difficulties and contradictions of every kind to which the theories of personality have led come from our having imagined, on the one hand, a series of distinct psychological states, each one invariable, which would produce the variations of the ego by their very succession, and on the other hand an ego, no less invariable, which would serve as support for them. How could this unity and this multiplicity meet?. . .
>
> The truth is that there is neither a rigid, immovable substratum nor distinct states passing over it like actors on a stage. There is simply the continuous melody of inner life—a melody which is going on and will go on, indivisible, from the beginning to the end of our conscious existence. Our personality is precisely that. . . . [Yet] we have no interest in listening to the uninterrupted humming of life's depths. . . .

The problem is to learn how to get in there to look and to listen, and then come out into the external world—how to go back in again and come out again. A cycle of renewal. The other day someone said to me that he was interested only in people who had looked in, been appalled and forgiven themselves in order to get on with life. But I think he is wrong. Such an act of forgiving is too likely to be a tipping of the hat in polite acknowledgment and

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a turning away with no intention of exploring again. It is not so easy to forgive the appalling, especially if one finds it in *oneself*. I think instead that one must, to stay within the borders of distinctively human life, and to be fully alive—one must, with whatever Pascalian vertigo, look back down into that murky broth of self again and again, not to forgive but to understand, which will perhaps, paradoxically, lead eventually to genuine self-forgiveness. One must, in short, invoke that darkness, listen and record—and then go out, to see the stars again.

Montaigne was fully aware of all this long, long ago. I have learned more from him than from most contemporary psychologists. Morality, he believed, depends chiefly on psychology, on learning what we are, what we may justly expect or hope to be and how we can implement this hope. Moreover, although he was innocent of automation, was never aware of *Australopithecus africanus,* he was very conversant in his own way with man's animal origins and nature. "It is still man we are dealing with," he says in the essay called "The Art of Discussion," and "his condition is amazingly physical." From the earliest *Essays* he stresses the value of the study of self.

> We must probe the inside and discover what springs set man in motion. . . . I who spy on myself [most] closely, who have my eyes incessantly intent on myself, as one who has not much business elsewhere—I would hardly dare tell of the vanity and weaknesses that I find in myself. . . . Others always go elsewhere, if they stop to think about it; they always go forward; as for me, I roll about in myself. This capacity for sifting truth . . . I owe principally to myself.

The central importance of self-study for Montaigne is that it teaches us *to live*. He approves Socrates' view that, without this, all other knowledge is a waste of time. "I make no account," he writes, "of the goods that I have been unable to employ in the service of my life. . . . I have put all my efforts into forming my life. That is my trade and my work." . . .

Montaigne is almost always very clear. In forming what he calls his *judgment*, he is honest and shrewd. He comes, indeed, to a great deal of self-knowledge, but he stops short—for that is *his* nature—of those depths of feeling that are so rare for most of us, so hard to describe or define, and yet are to anyone who has ever experienced them the established source of the energy of his life and the nearest, in my opinion, that man may come to a true *celebration* of life.

These are perhaps religious depths, or at least so interpreted throughout history by seers and priests and those we call visionaries.

Mysticism, you may say. True, if you will, but not the most familiar sort, rather a physical mysticism. Its most superficial level for me is discovering that my body puns. I learned this through having at different times a stiff neck, blood in my eye, nausea, and a weakness in my knee which made me limp. When I caught the pun, in each case the symptom disappeared within a short time. But in this dialogue, to which, I find, very few people attend, one sometimes suffers considerable pain. One had best listen well or be unaware of the whole business. This fact came to me most clearly when I had an infection of the middle ear that didn't respond to this sort of exorcism.

It is probably arbitrary to divide the human world into two camps, those of the dry well and those of the full well. But something like this is part of my experience. After my first (and late) encounter with an unreasoned sense of my own identity, my separateness, and at the same time my interconnection with all other living, growing things, the words "the wet green world" kept recurring in my mind and I felt an exuberance, a joy in life wholly alien to any previous experience. Where had I been all those years? In some sterile clinic, I told myself. I could almost smell its disinfectant, antiseptic corridors, see its barren white-painted rooms, empty of all life, filled with the odors of medication and preservation.

This was true, but in another sense, I had been in the Deep Freeze. My flesh had never been informed of me, my heart had

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beaten like a clock, the fluid in my veins had been as static, as glass-encased as though captive in a test tube.

But now life moved, raced, echoed through me. I could feel hatreds, jealousies, intolerance, self-pitying complaints falling off me like dried, flaked skin. There was oil in the new skin that lay beneath. . . .

Did it last? No. But it comes back now and then.

Shakespeare, Dostoevski, Goethe knew and wrote of this experience—far beyond my capacities. I think of it (with man added) as Darwin's tangled bank.

Bergson has described this experience admirably:

> Thanks to philosophy, all things acquire depth —more than depth, something like a fourth dimension, which permits anterior perceptions to remain bound up with present perceptions, and the immediate future itself to become partly outlined in the present. Reality no longer appears then in the static state, in its manner of being; it affirms itself dynamically, in the continuity and variability of its tendency. What was immobile and frozen in our perception is warmed and set in motion. Everything comes to life around us, everything is revivified in us. A great impulse carries being and things along. We feel ourselves uplifted, carried away, borne along by it. We are more fully alive and this increase of life brings with it the conviction that grave philosophical enigmas can be resolved, or even perhaps that they need not be raised, since they arise from a frozen vision of the real and are only the translation, in terms of thought, of a certain artificial weakening of our vitality. . . .

And Matthew Arnold:

> A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast
> And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.
> The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
> And what we mean, we say and what we would we know.
> A man becomes aware of his life's flow
> And hears its winding murmur, and he sees
> The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze. . . .
> And then he thinks he knows
> The hills where his life rose,
> And the sea where it goes. . . .

So much for the source, the forces of renewal. What about the conduct of life? Surely a different matter. Well, all distinctively *lived* life is commitment. This frequently, when carried out in practice, is like riding one of those jolting machines intended to make one lose excessive flesh. But to be fully or even mostly engaged in the rough and tumble, the push and pull of life, is to be vulnerable.

And all around us we find people in masks and armor. I want to distinguish between the social mask (there is, after all, no need to be intimate with everyone, or to tell everything you know) and the self-mask, the product of long years of attrition. Sometimes, after a period spent with a person whose mask (*in this sense*) is so old that it is cracked, I think of him afterward as alone and tugging desperately to remove it, only to find that it's stuck forever.

Somewhere along in the thirties of every life, at the latest, it seems to me, each of us begins to acquire the face he deserves. If one wears the mask or masks perpetually, is there only a blankness under them?

The masked person leads a life of paranoic (however dulled) strategy and maneuver. What will so-and-so think of him? How can he get his own way without appearing to do so? How can he keep Jones from learning how insecure he really is? But deeper than these are all the moves he makes to avoid the force of the direct impact of other personalities. I have known many people, anyone of whom so departmentalized his images of himself, or so alternated his masks—like wigs—that whenever there were at the same time two or three other people with him, toward each of whom he was accustomed to present a particular different mask, these juxtapositions threw him into a panic close to hysteria.

We cannot regain our prelapsarian innocence, but it is possible to have a sufficient acquaintance with oneself, to have risked a sufficient exposure of that self to others, that one may feel oneself, however complex and divided, still at least raggedly *one* in the midst of many. Life as strategy and maneuver is ultimately terrifying; the engaged and vulnerable life is full

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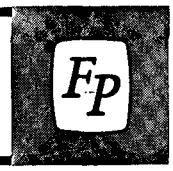

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of pain, but ultimately fulfilling, the practice of a genuinely humanistic ethic.

What are some of the inner conditions that one must learn to live with to attain any considerable share of that fulfillment?

One I am sure of is to accept what I think of as our mixed motivation—to be honest about it and to accept it. By mixed motivation I mean that we may often, perhaps must always, be simultaneously motivated by self-serving and by helping or caring for others.

Consider generosity and the need to be liked or even loved. Take the desire for complete honesty, and exhibitionism; or self-denial in the interests of something beyond self, and self-effacement. I do not mean that there is no difference between the two elements in each of these pairs. To the contrary. But I doubt if we can disentangle each from the other in many cases, nor do I believe it worth the effort. What I think is important is to understand that, even in what seems to be the noblest, or the worst, of acts, there must be some ambiguity of motivation.

To feel that one's motives are regularly and exclusively altruistic is to believe oneself other than human. To believe that one is exclusively motivated by self-interest (consider the self-destructive tendencies, the predatory animal rending himself) and to be ashamed of that self-interest, is futile and debilitating. . . .

I have spoken of the sometimes desperate need to learn to balance one's tensions. I dream of peace, of some ultimate tranquility, but I know that I shall never find it: that is not within the reach of most of us. Indeed, when one considers the strength and ferocity of some of our compulsive drives, one might think of each of us as winding himself up early in the morning, to follow the day's prescribed round.

There is no aspect of this compulsiveness that so discourages me in myself as my trivial and rigid habits of tidiness—those repetitive cycles of doing small and necessary, but unimportant chores, in exactly the same order that I have done them before. If this were efficiency, I could accept it; but it is not. Frequently, it takes me longer than if I performed them in a casual and unpremeditated way.

A further and more devastating version occurs when one discovers oneself reenacting an old drama with a new person or persons—ones for whom the plot is not appropriate. Do we ever have done with our mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters? Sometimes I think the only proper definition of neuroticism is the failure of effective memory, the inability to recognize these repetitions and deal with them.

Finally, however, we come to those larger and most frightening compulsions. Let's use the old names: covetousness, lust, wrath and pride. Are these instinctual? And, as Ardrey would have it, pre-human-history in origin? I do not know, but I suggest that most unjustified anger comes from irrational claims we make on others and are not granted. I think of an experience of some years ago. Seated in a train, I was reading a morning newspaper. Dwight Eisenhower (not yet President) had been given some extraordinary citation and decoration. The stock market was up, my favorite team had won yesterday's baseball game, a book that I had a hand in publishing had made the best-seller list. There was a prediction of continued sunny, pleasant weather. All this—and yet I found that I had become irritable, and now my irritability was mounting into a savage fury. And yet only a few minutes before, I had sat down to read the paper, feeling content and amiable. It took me the rest of the trip to fasten at last with a snap of recognition on the fact, yes, *fact*, that Eisenhower had received altogether too many medals and it was time that someone gave me one. Moreover, it had better be a good one. . . .

Similarly, an overriding sense of fear when one can see no realistic explanation for this diffused anxiety, often comes from suppressed guilt over a quite specific act. It is then, although its message is blurred, a form of self-castigation.

Again, quite often, after one has spoken or acted violently, one is assailed by a sudden anonymous fear and may dismiss it as

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fear of retribution. But most often, I think, it is rather terror over the discovery of the predatory animal within oneself.

All these human miseries! With pride, false pride (the instinct for dominance), still the ultimate matrix. No wonder many people resign from life. How much to indulge, how much to control? How much to cajole or circumvent? It must be played by ear, with vigilance and flexibility and a striving after effective memory. These forces in us must have ventilation, lest they explode lethally, and that ventilation, most of the time, must take place within the narrow confines of the human skull. It is a difficult discipline.

But then much of human life *is* painful. I once asked an octogenarian friend of mine to explain his almost youthful vigor. After playfully evading so grave a question for a little while, he looked up at me—grimly, I thought with surprise—and said, "I have lived with my pain."

I find that a great part of living with one's pain is sustaining one's considered resolutions. As the annual joke goes, heroic resolutions are easy; sustaining them and fulfilling them are not. This discipline results, with many of us, in daily irritability. The solution, I think, is to find ways that are convincing to oneself to consider so sustained an effort a challenge, not a denial of self. One thing is sure: the old ideals of a muscular will are not congenial to many of us any longer, except when applied to worldly ambition. I have known only a few people in a long time who take the expression "free will" seriously. It is as though there has been a consensus that our individual wills are infected, if not dead—or have been, from the beginning, a fictitious concept. But I would suggest, whatever the terminology, that the kind of self-discipline that is possible and fulfilling comes from extensive self-knowledge, and more from the sense within oneself of growing, and finding that growing a source of liking oneself—than from a muscular concept of self-mastery. One key, surely, is not to make one's resolutions on too heroic a scale. Yes, perhaps a man's reach should exceed his grasp, but not by so much as to make failure inevitable.

The tough core of these problems is exercising conscious choice—not essentially between good and evil, which lack, after all, a universal definition, but rather between two goods, two desired ends that are incompatible. Often it is the choice between the value of the moment ("Oh, stay, thou art so fair") and the long continuity stretching before one. Whether it be glory or recognition in opposition to principle and conscience; whether it be only a man's share of comfort and peace opposed to what he feels to be his responsibility—it is the most grueling of human disciplines....

The contemporary humanist I am implicitly invoking throughout this part of my paper, faces an ideal of responsibility most difficult to attain. That is: to believe one's every act has importance to oneself and to others, without becoming obsessed with self-conscious evaluations.

I do not mean that one should or could consciously initiate every act with this realization, but only that if one pursues self-knowledge down some of the paths we have followed, one will eventually be living in an emotional and intellectual climate that will enable one much of the time to have such a sense of responsibility to oneself and to others without consciously thinking of it very often.

And finally—the two-pronged concept of responsibility leads to the Thou half of Martin Buber's dialogue between I and Thou.

Day after day, hour after hour, we misunderstand each other because we cross well-marked boundaries; we blur the sense of *you out there* and *me here;* we merge, frequently very sloppily, the subjective with the objective, in various ways. We make of the other person simply an extension of self, either through the attribution of our own thoughts and attitudes to the other person or by too facile a decision about his nature, after which we go on responding to him as though he were the

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character we have invented. Or we force him-her into the role of surrogate for some member of the original cast. Or yet again, we have built up early in life a mythical community wholly subjective but now often imposed on the outside world of empirical actuality. We reenact, reenact, reenact.

The often invoked injunction to respect—and not to use—other people is insufficient. We must *listen*. To explore, to find out the quality, flavor and substance of another person's mind, of another personality, is one of the joys of life. All of a sudden one is no longer alone in his self-engrossed cell. But to attain this joy we must listen—instead of being busy preparing a reply, while uttering that most uninspiring of human sounds: uh-huh.

At the very least, life as dialogue can be amusing, entertaining. Listen for the key words and phrases. If a man repeatedly introduces what he has to say with "frankly" or "I am going to be honest with you" or "to tell the truth," one must infer that this assertion and repetition have a particular significance. The red semaphore is blinking.

I use simple examples and necessarily few. One of the most egotistical and even tyrannical men I have ever known always, in introducing his opinion about a decision to be made, used the words—and I mean *used*—"I, *for one*, am in favor of this plan."

These ambiguities of meaning are interesting, amusing and helpful in understanding a little more about other people. But open listening reaps a better harvest than that. For when there is a real engagement between two people who find that they have something to say to each other, and the capacity, the curiosity, to listen both imaginatively and carefully—then there is a rare communication and response. There is an unguarded spontaneity in such dialogue. Life spreads its wings.

This is real reciprocity, genuine mutuality, the thing itself. . . . And this brings us to love. Love, I think, is the celebration of life in oneself and in someone else, a celebration consummated in the meeting of two personalities that delight in each other. Reciprocity is essential to love. One person may worship another, but not love him unless the intensity of feeling is shared. One may not love nature, books, music—however much one may admire, revere, be awed or delighted by any particular work of art or nature. Such experiences are unilateral; love moves always *to and from*.

Love, as I see it, must not be abstracted. Distrust him who professes to love humanity. It cannot love him back, and he is probably only declaring his need to find love somewhere. The very fact that he abstracts his professed love is a telling symptom.

Nor is love easy, of course, to sustain throughout long and close association. As time wears on, there is inevitably a process of attrition—with very rare exceptions. When all the words have been spoken, all the gestures made, all the rooms and corners of the other's personality explored, then there may emerge—but only *may*—a different autumnal kind of love, composed of shared experience—joy and pain, exultation and boredom, work and play—and shared children. For I am now talking about marital love.

Love in the sense of friendship obviously undergoes much less stern a discipline. There are always periods of withdrawal and refreshment, so that one may bring oneself back to the friend, brimming over again. But in marriage this is not so—or at least not regularly so—and for marriage to last in any way beyond the empty fact of the wedding contract, another factor is needed: respect. This is impossible without self-respect, which is a far less negotiable commodity than is usually thought.

Then, too, when sexuality is involved, one must refer back to that principle of mixed motivation I have described. Whether one learns from the new anthropology or, say, from one of Dostoevski's tortured frenzied people, or from one's own experience, does not matter. What does matter is to accept, but not dismiss by ac-

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cepting, the ways in which love and hate sometimes commingle, as do self-adoration and love of another. One must probe the springs of desire and anger, of hurt pride and appetite. To love, and to sustain that love, requires among many other things a growing self-knowledge and a growing understanding of that separate, that discrete other, the Thou. It requires, beyond all else, the courage to *find out,* regardless of how unpalatable the findings may be.

What persuasion, what enticement does such a humanistic ethic as I have been trying to present offer to you and me? I suppose, in addition to this respect for truth, the appeal to challenge and response. Life as response, life as experience—not life passively endured. For the great enemy is apathy, indifference, callousness, the failure to engage. . . .

I know that I have no more than introduced, hinted at, the possibilities in such a way of life. I know too little, I have learned too late. I cannot consistently keep the scales from my eyes. But I take comfort in the words of Montaigne, which I offer you in conclusion:

> Others form man; I tell of him, and portray a particular one, very ill formed, whom I should really make very different from what he is if I had to fashion him over again. But now it is done. . . .
>
> I cannot keep my subject still. It goes along befuddled and staggering, with a natural drunkenness. . . .
>
> If my mind could gain a firm footing, I would not make essays, I would make decisions; but it is always in apprenticeship and on trial.

HIRAM HAYDN

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

A recent English book was entitled *Mediatrics; or, the Characteristics, Importance and Proper Care of the Middle-Aged.* Its subject, so the author said, is shamefully neglected in this day when we are so excessively concerned with pediatrics and gerontology that we forget the largest, most important and most overburdened class.

Along with much other relevant material, the treatise included a section on the criteria for determining when middle age has set in. But it failed to mention what seems to me the most dependable of all. Middle age (if I can remember that far back) begins when the individual ceases to believe that the newest opinions are the truest and begins to hold that the good old days of his youth really were good.

When this moment comes, the practical question is this: Should the aim be to "grow old gracefully" or to "stay young"? Contemporary prejudice being what it is, the how-to books all assume that the second alternative is obviously the more desirable and the stress is usually on "staying young mentally"—perhaps because self-deception is easier to achieve in that department than in any other. The group with which I am most concerned—namely, college professors and other professed or professional intellectuals—often pride themselves on keeping up-to-date. Its members read the latest books, take part in debates concerning the latest critical theories, cultivate a taste for jazz, expound the doctrines of existentialism, and "understand" if they don't exactly defend the beatniks.

My own opinion is that all this is usually a mistake. In the first place, they do rather badly what the young do much better, and the old fellow who tries to dance the frug is not much more ridiculous than the one who gives classroom lectures on Ginsberg, Kerouac, Jean Paul Sartre or even Salinger. In the second place, such writers as these are the ones whom the brighter students will discover for themselves and are more likely to over- than to undervalue. The professor's business is to see to it that his charges make the acquaintance of those they are less likely to find out for themselves and, especially, to hear what can be said in their favor.

We know that the future belongs to the young and even the present to those well that side of middle age. But the chief business of the liberal education—so it seems to me—is to brief the inheritors on their past and to bring them up-to-date rather than to design their future. Moreover, what the student learns today ought to be something that will not be merely of "historical interest" a decade hence, and no contemporary writer is ever as sure to be still interesting then as are those who have already (if I may use an old man's phrase) stood the test of time. I am not asserting that no contemporary writer will endure; only that we can't possibly know which ones will. The student who devotes himself to Chaucer and Shakespeare has a gilt-edged investment. If he has spent all his time on some of the bright stars of today it is just possible that within his lifetime they will be as out of fashion as Masefield and Galsworthy are now.

These points seem to have been largely overlooked in the controversy concerning

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our graduate schools of English that ran rather hot in the pages of the SCHOLAR a year or two ago. The dispute was mostly over the question of whether or not these schools actually are "modern," not whether or not they ought to be. One critic objected that T. S. Eliot was not sufficiently attended to, and the respondent replied that he was, on the contrary, extensively explicated and written about. But no one seems to have noticed the irony in the fact that Eliot himself has stated categorically that, in his opinion, neither his poetry nor that of any other contemporary has a proper place in the academic program which should be devoted to the classics exclusively. If Eliot is so important, why not ponder his opinion? The fact that in the 1962-63 academic season nearly one third of all dissertations were on twentieth-century literature and that more concerned William Faulkner than any other subject seems to me to suggest a possible imbalance not in favor of the ancients. While the old-fashioned dissertation on "The Major Influences on the Style of Peter Pindar" does not strike me as usually very fresh or important, I am not sure that the currently fashionable subjects like "The Unity of Henry James's Minor Novels" or "Patterns of Imagery in Faulkner's Short Tales" are always much better.

A recent and rueful experience of my own exemplifies how quickly novelty wears off and the sensational becomes old hat. Only one book of mine has ever been widely assigned as required reading, and my pride in the fact that it is still being so used thirty-six years after publication was considerably tempered by a letter from a professor in an American university. Because, so he said, this book (called *The Modern Temper*) had quite bowled him over when he read it as an undergraduate, he recently tried it out on his own students. I might be interested to know that the typical reaction was well stated by one of them who said that while the book had a certain historical interest in being, he presumed, rather advanced for its time, it could not be expected to impress those who had been brought up on Sartre, Beckett, *et al.* "To us, Mr. Krutch's pessimism seems quaint and rather sweet." Since my own frame of mind is somewhat more cheerful in 1965 than it was in 1929, and since to be modern is to be much less cheerful than I was at my worst, regret at being dismissed is somewhat tempered by the realization that I could not be up-to-date without being thoroughly miserable. Moreover, I have no doubt that several of my betters have produced a similar reaction. Does not O'Neill also seem quaint and sweet if you put him beside, say, Tennessee Williams?

If I understand correctly the contemporary terminology, a Square is not quite the same as what used to be called a Philistine. The latter is either non- or anti-intellectual and either indifferent to, or scornful of, all the arts. A Square, on the other hand, is a kind of middlebrow who defends the hopelessly passé in literature, art, philosophy and morals, and who has answers to important problems that those who are hep discovered long ago to be no answers at all. Few want to be put into that category and I certainly do not, but what the young readers of *The Modern Temper* were saying seems to be that while I was not Square by the standards of the late twenties that is precisely what the sixties have revealed me to be.

What I still have to say in this disquisition will confirm them in their opinion. It is simply this: the doubts and agonies that the contemporary *avant-garde* emphasizes and exploits most persistently do not and never have troubled me very much. I have plenty of old-fashioned ones of my own. I am not at ease in any Philistine Zion. But, to take two simple examples, the sense of lost identity and the problem of the unmotivated act do not paralyze my will or alienate me from society, the universe and myself. They seem, to put it bluntly, rather farfetched, and when I read a novel by Camus (so generally regarded as the least far out of the Existential novelists) I simply do not recognize myself in the characters or recognize my experience in theirs, and I cannot help wondering if the same is not true of many of those who nevertheless

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profess to find this literature the most interesting.

Whether to congratulate myself on this fact or to wonder uncomfortably if I am merely a Square after all, I do not know. In any case, my reaction to much of the most admired *avant-garde* writing is very much that to, say, the theological writings of Jonathan Edwards. His desperate attempts to convince himself that he would be willing to be damned throughout eternity if that would contribute to the glory of God seem to have been the result of a genuine conviction that he was lost forever unless he could acquiesce gladly in the possibility that he might be. I have no doubt that the dilemma was agonizingly real to him. But it is not to me. I wonder how many of my contemporaries find that the *avant-garde* books really do speak to their condition. I can pity Edwards and Camus, although the problems are certainly not real to me and my relation to the metaphysically founded sufferings of both seems to me equally remote.

The solutions at which so many of our writers arrive do not seem to me wholly valid. In even the middle-class magazines one reads more or less sympathetic reports that the Marquis de Sade (called by Simone de Beauvoir "the freest man who ever lived") is a writer so definitely "in" that familiarity with his works is a *sine qua non* to the aspiring intellectual, and that the most admired contemporary is Jean Genêt whose most admired work, *The House of Flowers,* is said to be a record of the fantasies that accompanied his masturbations while serving his term in prison. Sartre calls him St. Genêt because, if I understand him aright, Genêt had the courageous sincerity to act out in his own life the essential vileness that is the most characteristic feature of human nature and thus wins a position in the hierarchy of atheistic existentialism almost as high as that of Sade who demonstrated the complete freedom of the human will by doing precisely what religion, law and social custom had most insistently forbidden us to do.

If these ingenious paradoxes were new, there might be some excuse for those who are dazzled by them, and for concluding that they must represent an analysis of the human predicament to a depth never previously equalled. But they are not new. Rasputin's injunction, which is said to have been "Sin, because without sinning you cannot repent, and only those who repent attain the state of Grace," is somewhat similar and he probably borrowed it from the Manichaeans of the early Christian centuries whose doctrines were so similar to those of Sartre that they were led to call the betrayer of Jesus "St. Judas" nearly two thousand years before Sartre canonized Genêt. If the students were to dig deeper into the past, they might find their current heroes at least as much old hat and almost as quaint and sweet as the author of *The Modern Temper.*

One reader of this department complained that I quoted Dr. Johnson so often that I gave the impression of never having read anyone else. Only a Square, I suppose, would find in Johnson or in most of his contemporaries anything other than merely antiquarian interest. For the most part, they are not paradoxical and not much inclined to consider novelty a recommendation where morals, prudence or the pursuit of happiness are concerned. In fact, there is some appropriateness in the phrase used by Aldous Huxley when he spoke (without meaning to be wholly derogatory) of "the kindly superficiality of the Eighteenth Century." But for that very reason I think its writers might well have a place in the graduate schools of English at least as prominent as that of our contemporaries whom the student is much less likely to overlook. Their kindly superficiality might suggest "adjustments" to the human condition at least as satisfactory as those proposed by our own makers and thinkers who may not be superficial but are seldom timely.

In many respects I am even more of a Square than I once was partly because I have found in Johnson and others of his century problems much like my own and solutions more congenial than those offered by our *avant-garde.* The eighteenth century was reasonable rather than fanatically devoted to reason, and it would not have

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been much impressed by the argument that Sade and Genêt are supremely great writers and teachers just because ingenious paradoxes could be developed to prove that they are. If that century makes everything too simple, too orderly and best examined in the light of common day, we tend on the contrary to see everything as complex, whether it is or not, and to blur every distinction. The indispensable century may have had too much faith in common sense, but we have too little. If it was almost too completely at home in its daylight world we are too hopelessly alienated.

Although I realize that I am now about to tread upon dangerous ground, I will risk even the suggestion that our alienated and tortured youth might learn from the eighteenth century a solution of the so-called problem of sex that is at least preferable to the nonsolutions now commonly arrived at in the new literature. That solution many eighteenth-century men found in what might be called "the gallant game of love," and the Victorians found this solution very shocking. But the alienated modern is not likely to become Victorian in one step, and gallantry is surely preferable to the homosexual and sadistic perversions now so often sympathetically described as the most acceptable escape from the modern dilemma. I am not quite sure what that dilemma is, but it seems to be the result of two things: on the one hand, a conviction that practically everything is somehow sexual; on the other, a positively medieval distaste for the physiological aspects of normal love-making. John Donne (in some respects a century ahead of his time) once wrote:

> Whoever loves if he does not propose
> The right true end of love, he's one who goes
> To sea for nothing but to make him sick.

That is certainly not Victorian even in the assumed fact or in the poet's attitude toward it. It is a very simple way of reconciling love and sex, and even if it is not the best way, it does describe an attitude likely to provide an "adjustment" at least more satisfactory than any that seems to have been achieved by the most esteemed literary exponents of what they assume to be the inevitable modern dilemma.

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The American Impact Abroad

Past and Present

G. D. LILLIBRIDGE

IN A WORLD OF CLASHING CULTURES AND OPINION in which it seems obvious that only by emphasizing the commonality of men rather than their differences are we likely to survive, it almost constitutes a major threat to world peace to speak of the distinctive qualities of America, particularly since our nationalistic pride often impels us to imply, in our distinctiveness, superiority. And the Americans, as many people would point out, are insufferable enough as it is without my implying that they are God's gift to mankind.

Nevertheless, I would like to suggest that for almost five centuries—first in the West and then in the East—America has been the most significant single experience for the rest of the world. This is not so threatening a view to man's commonality as it appears, for one of the things such diverse peoples as the Japanese and the English have in common is America.

No other country has so shaken the emotions like a heavy wind, irritated the spirit, stirred the imagination, propelled thought in new directions, and altered the form and content of everyday life in places both near and distant around the globe. Few peoples have found it possible entirely to exclude America from their consideration of what is important to them, whether they have viewed it as myth or reality, held it up as model or warning, seen it as benefactor or threat, regarded it as pioneer of progress or of perversion.

The usefulness of this view that seeks to explore our influence upon others and their image of us lies in the added clarity it gives

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to our understanding not only of ourselves but of other peoples in the world. For this particular perspective helps to broaden our knowledge of what has been most important in our changing development as a distinctly American society and as a part of world society. Sometimes we are blind not only to our faults, but to our virtues as well. Moreover, in other peoples' reactions to us, America has held up, as it were, a mirror to the nature of man in which may be seen reflected men's aspirations, their needs, their problems and their fears.

There have been three great eras of American influence. The first of these extended from the days of discovery to the end of the colonial period, and in this period of almost three centuries it was the sheer physical presence of America that most deeply affected and, in the long run, altered European life and helped to project the European world into the modern era. For the New World opened up to the Old a treasurehouse of natural wealth, a profusion of plant and animal life and mineral resources, which not only made its mark upon Western economic life but upon its social and intellectual life as well.

First, there was the enormous impact made by the great influx of precious metals into the European economy. From 1500 on, a steady stream of gold and silver found its way, through Spanish spending and English stealing, throughout Europe—an incredible expansion in specie which extended the basis for a money economy and stimulated the rise of modern capitalism.

More important than this, however, was the enormous flow of wealth represented by the extent and productive fertility of the lands of the New World. This not only involved an extension of resources already known to Europeans, those of the forest and stream, but also the introduction of products previously unknown to Europeans—the potato, maize, kidney and lima bean, peanut, chocolate, tomato, squash, avocado, maple sugar, watermelon, cucumber, and the Indian's secret weapon, tobacco, to name but a few.

The image of abundance and fertility that the New World presented to the Old was captured by the Elizabethan playwrights, Beaumont and Fletcher. For them, as for so many others, the New World was a place—

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Where every wind that rises blows perfume
And every breath of air is like an Incense:
The treasure of the Sun dwells here, each tree
As if it envied the Old Paradise
Strives to bring forth immortal fruit . . .
Nothing bears a life, but brings a treasure.

Far-reaching economic changes were wrought in Europe by this outpouring of wealth from America, and the very patterns of survival, leisure and advancement were to be shaped by the new wealth. The exploitation of the wealth of the New World helped expand greatly in size and power old commercial classes, aided in the creation of a new working class, threatened the privilege and power of the established classes, and thus made its contribution to the development of a new and different and more dynamic social order in Europe.

Psychologically, too, the presence of new lands, unknown in the extent of their vastness and rich beyond measure, provided a sense of excitement, exuberance and opportunity—"a new face to the nation" as Henry Fielding called it in the eighteenth century. For many this boost in spirit was to lift them across the Atlantic into the new lands themselves.

Moreover, European intellectual life was greatly enriched and nourished by the life and phenomena uncovered to the West. The New World, by the very act of discovery, gave men an expanded view of the physical nature of the world. Geographic accounts of voyages and travels forced revision of older conceptions of the globe. Europe shrank while the world grew, and Englishmen were amazed to learn that overseas were "such spacious territories and dominions as our Great Britain measured will appear a garden in it." New life, varied and extensive beyond the knowledge of Europe, was unfolded. Hundreds upon hundreds of new forms of plant and animal life broadened the knowledge of Europeans of the world in which they lived, stimulating the establishment and work of scientific societies, promoting new and more accurate scientific classification of flora and fauna, and challenging old ideas based upon the limited knowledge of the medieval world.

Men's imaginations and thought were also greatly excited. One early traveler to the New World had prophetically noted that it

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offered "a fertile field for creative fanciful genius to explore, and may give rise to the most novel, elegant, and beautiful flights of imagination; and the brightest, most ingenious, and splendid embellishments of fiction." The common tongues of Europe were given new vitality by the popular accounts of the voyagers and adventurers to the New World who wrote in a racy and vivid vernacular. Poets and playwrights found new ideas and images to work with. Utopian literature, emphasizing the possibility of a better life in the here and now rather than in a past beyond recall, found new sources of strength in New World life, especially in the romantic image of the Indian. The North American Indian became the Noble Savage—the man of nature whose life, stripped of the sin and superficiality of sophisticated cities, was a challenge to the restricted and often frustrating society of old Europe. The Indian provided the critics of European society with a vision of a new order for man, based on the laws of nature. And that ache in the human heart to escape from the pressures and problems of organized society found projection in dramas of the simple good life of the New World, as it did for Abraham Cowley in 1688 when he recorded that he yearned "to retire myself to some of our American Plantations, not to seek gold . . . But to forsake this world forever, with all the vanities and Vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat." Perhaps it is only poetic justice that today those Americans who long for escape from the vexations of American society, wish to bury themselves in some obscure fishing retreat in Southern Italy or Greece, there to enjoy the simple natural life God intended for man.

Of equal influence in shaping European development was the character of the new society coming into being in the New World among the English North American colonies. Although Europeans had in general only the vaguest notions of American colonial society, nevertheless, during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, there began to emerge a general vision of society in the New World that identified the American colonists with a new social and political order. Much of this sentiment took shape in the image of the Pennsylvania Quaker. As early as 1681, William Penn had his agent in Rotterdam distribute pamphlets in French, Dutch and German that held forth lures of peace and plenty, rep-

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resentative government, taxation by consent, and religious freedom. It was Voltaire, however, who started the Quaker, and hence the American, legend on its popular journey throughout Europe. Like so many Europeans, he put upon the American stage the creatures of his own desire, although the experiment in Pennsylvania offered much to go upon. He wrote of the spirit of equality, the religious freedom, the peace and the absence of priests, and declared that "William Penn could boast of having brought into the world that golden age of which men talk so much and which probably has never existed anywhere except in Pennsylvania."

The image of America as the society of the common man gradually took shape in the minds of those who read or heard about the sort of comment one Plymouth colonist wrote home to friends and relatives, "We are all freeholders, the rent day does not trouble us," or observations like that of the British official who wrote in 1760 that in America "under forms of a democratical government, all mortifying distinctions of rank are lost in common equality; and . . . the ways of wealth and preferment are alike open to all men."

But it was, of course, the crisis of the American Revolution that turned vision into reality and opened up a new era in American influence upon Europe, and ultimately upon the world. For the Revolution became the reality and the symbol of the possibility of change in the old order of things. The general European understanding that the American Revolution was being fought for certain political and social liberties caused sudden and great excitement among those Europeans who for decades had been able to argue the case of liberty and equality only in the courts of their own imaginations. However idealistically many Europeans may have appraised the nature of liberty and equality in America, however imperfectly they may have grasped the facts of the case for revolution, for the first time they had at hand an example of the strength and vitality of these ideas in the instance of a people willing to hazard their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor in defense of them. Europeans now had, in short, the concrete example. They knew its value and they used it. Condorcet noted this: "It is not enough that the rights of man be written in the books of philosophers and inscribed in the hearts of virtuous men; the weak

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and ignorant must be able to read them in the example of a great nation. America has given us this example."

For many Europeans, therefore, the American Revolution represented the natural culmination of the Enlightenment; it proved the validity of ideas about liberty and equality Europeans had long discussed; it provided examples of how to institutionalize these ideas; it made European society by comparison seem unattractive; it made Europeans political activists; it stimulated movements of reform and revolution (the most notable being the French Revolution); and it brought into being a new nation whose continued sense of commitment to certain fundamental ideas provided for three-quarters of a century a striking example of what it was possible for men to accomplish if they set themselves to the task.

Indeed, from the time of the establishment of the Republic to the great crisis of the Civil War, America was, for Europeans seeking change and reform in their own societies, "a beacon of freedom" to guide them on their way. America's experiments with constitution-making, with the extension of the franchise toward full manhood suffrage, with the advantages of a free press, with the building of a free public school system, with the disestablishment of religion and the separation of church and state, with constant social reform achieved through political action—all these and more provided both hope and working model for millions striving for democracy in their own societies, and for those who clung tenaciously to the established order these same developments in America gave them their most fearful thoughts about the future.

Thus on the one hand, America became identified as the defender of the cause of the people—spokesman for the common man who, in his new dignity and in his general elevation in society, marked the triumphant test of democratic institutions. Wrote Anthony Trollope of the Americans: "They walk like human beings made in God's form. If this be so . . . should not such knowledge in itself be sufficient testimony of the success of the country and of her institutions?" And the radical *Reynolds' Weekly Newspaper* summed up for Englishmen the meaning of the much-used phrase, "Americanization":

> Americanized, as far as we are able to make out, means that the working classes should be made free citizens of the country enriched by their

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toil and defended by their courage—that they should have a voice in the making of the laws which they are bound to obey—that every child born in the country should have the means of a moral, a mental, and a physical education placed within its reach—that every worker should be amply remunerated for his work—that every man, woman, and child in the land should have plenty of wholesome food to eat and plenty of comely and comfortable clothing to wear—that no able-bodied pauperism should be permitted to exist—and that no man or woman should be compelled to resort to criminal courses for the preservation of life.

Which is about as close a description of the Great Society as we can get without resorting to the master's own words. It should be cold comfort indeed to President Johnson's domestic enemies to learn that what they have been opposing all along is the Americanization of our own society.

On the other hand, in that earlier day, America by virtue of its great experiment posed a threat of the most serious nature to privilege—to an established order organized for the glory and benefit of the few at the expense of the many. That defender of the old order, Metternich, well aware of what was at stake, observed of the Americans that

in fostering revolutions wherever they may show themselves, in regretting those which have failed, in extending a helping hand to those which seem to prosper, they lend a new strength to the apostles of sedition and reanimate the courage of every conspirator. If this flood of evil doctrines and pernicious examples should extend over the whole of America, what would become of our religious and political institutions, of the moral force of our governments, and of that conservative system which has saved Europe from complete dissolution?

From 1789 to 1865, in country after country across the face of Europe, and throughout the western hemisphere itself, reform and revolution proclaimed indebtedness to the American example—and everywhere opposition and reaction rested correspondingly upon a fear of American leadership in the rising challenge to the old order of privilege.

Beginning in the period after the American Civil War, when the United States embarked upon its remarkable course of industrial growth, America entered upon a new era of impact and image abroad. Whereas in the first half of the nineteenth century the term "Americanization" referred to the rising tide of democracy

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in the Western world, by the opening of the twentieth century the term implied the impact of industry and technology and all their concomitant effects upon the peoples of the world.

The Americans, since the colonial period, had frequently impressed Europeans with their inventive practicality, with their interest and skill in putting knowledge to use to improve men's lives, as the European reaction to Franklin's lightning rod illustrates, and by the time of the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in 1851 it was apparent that a new era of American influence was in the making. The London *Times,* long noted for its hostility to America, looked over the displays of Colt's revolvers, Goodyear's vulcanized rubber, Hobbs's locks, and McCormick's sensational agricultural machinery, and frankly admitted: "Great Britain has received more useful ideas, and more ingenious inventions, from the United States, through the exhibition, than from all other sources."

By 1900 the United States had become the major industrial power of the world, and her machine tools, engines, electrical apparatus, as well as a wide variety of industrial products from sewing machines to shoes and boots, flowed across the Atlantic in an invasion of Europe that was not only to provide a model for European technological development but to provoke envy among European business concerns. It was admitted by Europeans that in technical know-how the Americans had the edge on Europe, and that the American emphasis upon machinery, laborsaving devices, interchangeable parts, standardization and mass production pointed the way to what could be expected from the full exploitation of the industrial process. By the end of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth, foreign commissions, both governmental and private, were visiting the United States to study the achievements of American industrial development.

The extension abroad of America as an industrial giant was reinforced and accompanied by the march abroad of American business and business methods and capital. By the opening of the twentieth century American advertising techniques had begun to penetrate Europe, significant numbers of American firms had opened branch offices and factories overseas, and American capital was beginning its influential flow abroad.

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The nature and extent of these influences brought to the fore new images of the United States and strengthened as well older views of America. For one thing, these developments produced a rising reaction against what was called American materialism. Although European conservatives had long commented on American indifference to culture and our obsession with the "fast buck," it was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth that this image became a really significant element in the European view of the United States. The Norwegian observer, Knut Hamsun, wrote in 1889:

> In America there has grown up a way of life that aims at nothing but food-stuff and the acquisition of material benefit or wealth. The Americans are so busy fighting for profits that they use all their abilities for this purpose and interest themselves in nothing else. Their brains are weaned on values and numbers; they have no more beloved matter to employ their thoughts upon than what is taught daily by the various financial operations. . . . The Americans are a business nation; in their hands everything becomes business. But they are very little an intellectual nation; their civilization is sadly deficient.

Others were fearful of the effects of American industrialization and American business on established patterns of life in Europe. A Frenchman in 1902 prophesied with despair that if American influence in these areas continued, America would "subjugate our spirit, change our mores and institutions, and overthrow the equilibrium of the civilized world." The Westminster *Gazette* in England, recognizing that the clock could not be turned back, proposed that the answer to this problem lay somewhere between what it called this "American disease" and "the complacency which is fully convinced that old ways are best because they are old."

At the same time, it is also clear that the pain of unemployment, the drama of labor-capital violence in great strikes, the extent of poverty, and the rise of great wealth—the unfortunate by-products of America's rapid industrial development—spoiled the old radical view of America as a paradise for the common man, and prompted many European radicals to reject the American example. The Englishman, William Clark, described this change in attitude:

> A quarter of a century ago the American Republic was the guiding star of advanced English political thought. It is not so now . . . it is not

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merely a question of machine politics, of political corruption, of the omnipotent party boss . . . Over and beyond this is the great fact of the division between rich and poor, millionaires at one end, tramps at the other, a growth of monopolies unparalleled, crises producing abject poverty just as in Europe. These facts proved to men clearly that new institutions were of no use along with the old forms of property; that a mere theoretic democracy unaccompanied by any social change, was a delusion and a snare.

Nevertheless, for the masses of Europeans the growth of industrial America merely strengthened the old image of America as the land of opportunity and social equality. As early as the Exhibition of 1851 the New York representative had summed up his observations of one kind of reaction to the American exhibits: "The character of our articles were such as to show to the world that we worked for the great masses, not the luxurious few." The theme that despite economic problems, which the masses of Europeans were unfamiliar with anyway, America demonstrated how highly favorable democratic institutions were to individual and national prosperity, was to be repeated again and again in subsequent decades. Moreover, the persistence of the idea that America represented the achievement of social equality even in the new environment of city and factory could be noted in the complaint of an Italian landowner that the "men who come back from America walk through the streets as if they were our equals . . . the worst of it is, Signor, that they lose respect for us!" The extent to which these views of America were widely held among the masses of Europeans is nowhere more fully documented, of course, than in the statistics of European emigration to America in the latter years of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth.

By the twentieth century, then, there were three great areas in which American influence abroad had been profound: the impact of America's natural wealth from the soil, the impact of our social and political experiments in democracy, and the impact of our industrial-technological-business expansion.

In the twentieth century the dominant American influence as the major symbol of the industrial-technological civilization the world was fast becoming was, of course, dramatically underscored

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by American achievement in the two great wars, especially the second in which American technology demonstrated what industrialism could mean for people whose primitive, unbalanced and underdeveloped economies had long placed an intolerable strain upon the human heart and the human back. From the South Pacific to the south of Italy, people came into contact with the material benefits of science and technology—from the bulldozer to penicillin—and their aspirations and ambitions were never to be the same again. If, in certain established Western societies, wartime austerity created resentment among some at the careless display of wealth by American soldiers, among the underprivileged and the backward there was only admiration and desire. As Margaret Mead has expressed the reaction of the Manus Islanders to their wartime exposure to the Americans: "The Americans believe in having work done by machines so that men can live to old age instead of dying worn out while they are still young"—a reaction shared by many around the globe.

At the same time, America as symbol of democracy did not disappear in the twentieth century, but was indeed given new meaning and vigor by the crises of war and depression. In the 1930's, America, in the experiment of the New Deal, seemed to many Europeans to offer the last best hope in a world of depressing alternatives. And, as great Presidents have a way of doing, Roosevelt, like Wilson before him, became in war a symbol of the common man's hopes for a decent and just world. The English historian, Isaiah Berlin, has recorded:

> As the skies of Europe grew darker, in particular after war broke out, he seemed to the poor and the unhappy in Europe a kind of benevolent demigod who alone could and would save them in the end. In his moral authority, the degree of confidence which he inspired outside his own country . . . he has no parallel . . . He became a legendary hero—they themselves did not know quite why—to the indigent and the oppressed far beyond the confines of the English-speaking world.

Moreover, if Roosevelt was the symbol, the common soldier was the reality. Despite the occasional behavior bespeaking the arrogance of the wealthy, the naïveté of the ignorant, and the violence of the trooper on soil not his own, the dominant image of the American as soldier was not only that of liberator, but that ex-

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pressed in one of Bill Mauldin's most perceptive cartoons—the dirty, ragged, unshaven Willie handing food to a dirty, emaciated, tattered urchin of the storm of war—titled simply "The Prince and the Pauper." With all the indictments one may draw up against the American soldier, he nevertheless carried with him wherever he went a generous concern for ordinary people which had traditionally been our finest export and which symbolized a new era in human relationships for most of the peoples of the world.

The reactions of the Manus Islanders, who suffered from the disabilities of not only an internal caste structure but an external white-black one as well, suggest clearly the nature of this impact of the American in the days of war. "The Americans treated us like individuals, like brothers," said one. "From the Americans we learned that human beings are irreplaceable and unexpendable, while all material things are replaceable and so expendable," said another.

Out of this hasty survey of four and a half centuries of American impact and image abroad, concluding with the Second World War, it is possible to draw a number of conclusions concerning America and her role in the world, but two are of particular significance. First, America has represented, indeed threatened and forced by its example, change in established patterns and attitudes of life. Second, since the founding of the Republic, America has reflected the fundamental aspirations of the masses of peoples elsewhere in the world for improvement of their condition economically, socially and politically.

In short, whether people reacted to the United States with favor or with dread, America appeared as both symbol and example of the major forces reshaping the world in modern times. Generally speaking, Americans themselves were, up to the twentieth century, content with the passive role of symbol and example; an aggressive exploitation of the role of prophet of change was proposed by only a few. Under the impact, however, of the two great wars of the twentieth century, and especially the second, this passive role of the United States underwent significant alteration and this was to affect deeply the impact and image of the United States throughout the world. It has been in the twenty years since the end of World War II that this shift in impact and image has

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become most noticeable, and indeed has caused not only concern abroad but bewilderment among Americans themselves.

Let me, therefore, note briefly the various ways in which the United States has, since 1945, affected the rest of the world, and the manner in which this influence has shifted and thus produced new images of the United States.

The most obvious American influence has been economic in nature, arising from our immense industrial-technological authority and associated with American business expansion and investment overseas. The United States emerged from the Second World War as the greatest, wealthiest industrial power on earth. This country alone possessed in the postwar years the liberal resources essential for rebuilding shattered economies and for laying the foundations for the construction of new economies in heretofore backward societies, and its resources were so extensive that it could embark upon this task without sacrificing America's own unprecedented and rapid economic expansion. What occurred, therefore, was a tremendous flood outward from the United States of economic resources, both public and private, unequaled in all history.

The largest amount of these resources was of course supplied by the United States government, more than sixty-six and a half billion dollars going abroad from the end of the war to mid-1962, in the form of economic aid. The flow of private American capital abroad was also considerable. The 1950's alone saw American capitalism invest abroad some thirty billion dollars, giving us by 1960 a capital investment abroad of about forty billion dollars, and so rapid was this rate of investment that predictions in 1960 estimated a total private American investment abroad by 1968 at ninety billion dollars. In addition to these channels of public and private funds moving overseas, there has been a less significant but substantial flow of philanthropic funds abroad.

Intimately involved in this economic aid have been American industrial and business methods and techniques. For example, beginning with the Marshall Plan, the American industrial and business experience had significant effect in reorienting western European economies to greater efficiency, to extended use of mass-production techniques, to heavy emphasis upon technological

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innovation, to the consumer-oriented economy, and to the various business methods that went along with these. In the Marshall Plan period, scores of teams of employers, technicians and workers from western European countries visited American industry to study its highly organized and efficient operations, and the effect of these studies upon the reorganization and development of various European economies was undeniable. Thus the American experience in the development of the mass-production, consumer-directed economy, with all its subsidiary techniques of installment buying, sophisticated consumer advertising, and so forth, provided a significant model for the modernization of the European economy. The tendency of western and northern Europeans to refer to all that is involved in this as the "Americanization" of their countries —whether they view the prospects in distress or delight—is simply another measure of American influence in the economic development of Europe since the war. Moreover, some of these methods and techniques have in recent years appeared also in eastern Europe. While it is probably true that the mass-produced, low-profit, low-price industrial unit that rests upon the purchasing power of the mass consumer is the very rationale of an industrial society, it is equally true that it has been the American experience that has, more clearly than any other, demonstrated its validity.

Many Europeans, particularly intellectuals of radical and liberal persuasion, have deeply resented this American economic invasion of the postwar years, and in a curious reversal of radical and liberal leadership of a century ago they have taken unto themselves the burden of defense of a Western culture and tradition threatened by the influence of American capitalism and technology. A sympathetic French observer of America, writer Pierre Emmanuel, has summed up the image of the American that has emerged from this reaction:

> A human robot; a worshipper of machines, brainwashed by the movies, advertising, and television, devoid of tradition, of family life, of self-intimacy; a money-maker for whom the dollar is the only universal value; a super-hygenic food washer who cleans vegetables with chlorine, totally depersonalized, conditioned to live in a spiritual vacuum: in short, a science fiction nightmare and a bore.

And indeed, if this were correct, who would not be fearful of the

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future in an American world? But Emmanuel goes on to point out that the clock cannot be turned back, that what is involved here is in reality modernization, in which America is the acknowledged leader, and that in the process of remolding European society to adjust to that process, "the American experience will be essential to our . . . re-evaluation of man." Putting it another way, a young French philosopher remarked: "To make life simpler in an increasingly complicated world is an American art, from which we may start to make life deeper and more significant."

Moreover, as many observers have pointed out, the common man in Europe who has benefited most from this "Americanization" has carried little resentment against it. His image of the United States as the great example of how the benefits of industrialism may be brought to the masses remains by and large unaltered.

Furthermore, the old European view of America as deficient in culture and intellectual attainment has also been undergoing a gradual transformation. While few regard America as the center of culture in art, literature and learning, Europeans and non-Westerners alike have increasingly recognized America's growing significance in culture and learning. John Russell, the art critic of the London *Sunday Times,* said in 1959, for example, in reference to Pollock and other American abstractionists, that at the very least "we can be grateful to the new American painters for proving that paint on canvass can still be one of the most exciting and controversial forms of human expression." The same sentiment has also been expressed abroad of American music, particularly jazz, and American literature. This discovery of American culture by the rest of the world has been promoted not only through private channels, but also by extensive cultural exchanges and visits arranged under the auspices of the United States government, which has sponsored hundreds of touring art shows, concerts, and lectures by writers, and the dissemination of American literature through its informational libraries abroad.

In addition, in the last twenty years the United States has been increasingly recognized as one of the centers, if not the leading center in the world, for the promotion and extension of knowledge. American scholarship has been recognized as of foremost quality in

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almost every field of endeavor, evidenced in the large numbers of foreign students studying in the United States for both undergraduate and advanced degrees and in the increasingly large numbers of foreign scholars who visit the United States for brief periods to acquaint themselves with the latest advances in their field of knowledge.

Beyond fears that American materialism will result in the exclusion or thrusting to the background of other aspects of human life and thought, there has also been in the postwar world considerable resentment of extensive American investment overseas—the movement abroad of American firms as well as their buying into foreign concerns. A classic example of this, and in the western hemisphere itself, has been Canada, where American interests now own over fifty percent of Canadian industry, a development that has naturally aroused fears of American dominance and rubbed raw the nerves of Canadian national pride.

The extension of American economic influence abroad in the forms I have described has of course occurred primarily in industrially established countries. Most of our economic aid abroad has since 1945 gone to such countries; France alone has received almost as much as all Latin American countries combined. And American investment abroad also has been most heavily concentrated in such countries. This has meant that in both quantity and kind our economic relations with non-Western and the less advanced countries have been different from those we have with Europe. In terms of economic aid, for example, we have been nowhere near so generous. Of the fifty billion dollars of American foreign aid since the Marshall Plan, only about ten percent, or five billion dollars, has gone to underdeveloped nations, either in the form of developmental loans (about three and a half billion dollars) or for technical assistance in such areas as technical training and equipment, health, education and welfare. The importance of these programs—based historically upon assistance that goes back to the nineteenth century —certainly must not be underestimated, since they are the bases upon which any significant economic development must rest. A sick and uneducated people cannot develop or sustain a modern economy. But we must not overestimate the achievement either.

Although our official aid has been rather limited to these coun-

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tries, it has been supplemented by extensive private aid from both religious and nonsectarian institutions. Achievements, from both sources, while not often dramatic, have been considerable. Roads and schools have been built with American funds, diseases such as yaws in Haiti have been eradicated and control greatly extended over others, the American HOPE project has taken to numerous countries highly skilled American physicians and surgeons demonstrating techniques in treatment and surgery. These contributions have all had their effect, principally in showing what could be done on a grand scale if highly organized and sustained effort were made.

Few people who have benefited directly from these contributions from America have remained ungrateful, but such gratitude has been counterbalanced by other factors governing America's economic relationship with such countries. Many underdeveloped countries, for example, receiving the mouse's share of our aid and investment, have protested that America has discriminated against the underdeveloped countries, and they have gone on to suggest that as far as the non-Western countries are involved this gives every appearance of white sticking with white and the colored peoples be damned. Moreover, this view of America has been reinforced by the very nature of American investment in such countries. American capital has concentrated primarily on the development and exploitation of natural resources, and this has placed the Americans in the position of becoming the new imperialists who exploit the natural wealth of underdeveloped peoples in collaboration with local ruling castes who do not share the profits of development with their own people. This has often been the case in the Near East, Africa, the Orient and Latin America, where there has been an intensification of a type of economic exploitation going back to the turn of the century and long resented. Furthermore, the frequent reluctance of American firms, with certain exceptions—the Kaiser operations in Argentina being one—to open up their operations to local investors or to hire local staff in positions beyond manual and clerical labor, has strengthened in such countries fears of a new form of colonialism as deadly as the old. Complaints in the Philippines against such discrimination are only one example of a common protest in such countries. Finally, we must remember that in many underdeveloped societies, there is

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a fear of change, a reluctance to part with old ways which are good because they are familiar. In such countries, therefore, where economic aid and assistance have even limited success, economic change means social and cultural change, for example in such institutions as the family. Thus if the Americans take credit for economic changes, they are saddled with the blame for disruption of established social patterns. In some patriarchal societies, for instance, resentment against a rising spirit of independence among women is directed against American influence.

A second major area of American impact and image abroad since the war has been in the arena of political life. Here the nature and extent of American influence has been considerable and varied. Probably the most dramatic example of American political influence was that of the Occupation of Japan, during which the United States sought to remold an autocratic country into an established democratic society. Under the Occupation, the Americans, in less time than it took the Founding Fathers, turned out a new constitution, introduced political and social equality, reorganized the educational system, and sought in essence to create in Japan a model democracy based upon the American experience. All in all, it was a remarkable venture and one of considerable success, although significant problems arose from the attempt to impose by edict outside institutions upon a culture with its own traditions and habits of mind and institution. As one Japanese observer remarked with delicate subtlety, "Some roses of the West, when transported to the East, lose their fragrance." It may be that of far greater influence in the long run will be the American pressure for and example of federalism upon the movement for a United States of Europe, in which initial success has been achieved in the economic realm with the establishment of the Coal and Steel Community and then the Common Market. But it remains for the future to decide what role American influence will play in the development of a politically united Europe.

Probably the most important aspect of American influence politically in the postwar period lies elsewhere, and in two mutually contradictory areas where the American past clashed with the American present.

Thus, out of the devastation, chaos and confusion of the Second

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World War, old empires crumbled, established social systems weakened, familiar values wasted away, old convictions perished, and into the vacuum moved the consuming energies of emergent nationalism and revolution. The United States had, on the basis of its own past, much to offer people engaged in such vital ventures, and the new nationalists and revolutionists were well aware of it. The wave of independence and revolutionary movements of the postwar world rested more than many of us care to admit upon the historic American example. Traditionally, from the days of the American Revolution and the rise of the Republic, America had been hailed as the great example of a people seeking to shake off colonialism and embark upon their own destiny free of outside influence and control and free to build a society reflective of the needs of the common people. We had, after all, been the first such nation brought into being in the modern world, created by its own people and faced with the problem of finding its own character. Dozens of new nations have emerged on the world scene since the last war and many of them have followed the pattern of developing American nationalism—they have emerged out of the breakup of former colonial empires (sometimes by peaceful arrangement, sometimes by revolution), they have depended upon the mass support of the people to achieve their goal, and they have sought to assert their independence by taking pride in their own distinctive characteristics and their own independence of judgment in the determination of their affairs. It is worth remembering that throughout the twentieth century—just as in Europe and Latin America in the nineteenth century—those seeking independence and revolutionary change have spoken of the American precedent and been influenced by it. Early in this century this element of American influence played its role in the formation of the Chinese Republic under Sun Yat-sen, in the rise of Indian nationalism under Gandhi and Nehru, and it indeed may not be amiss to recall that in 1920 a young Chinese named Mao Tse-tung wandered the countryside, carrying in his pocket a history of the American War of Independence. In the postwar period this use of the American precedent was intensified across the globe. Sukarno proclaimed Indonesian indebtedness to the American example in the revolt against the Dutch, Castro in Cuba quoted extensively from the

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Declaration of Independence to justify his revolution from the Sierra Maestra, Cypriot rebels widely distributed in the United States a pamphlet comparing line by line the American Revolution with their own conflict against the British Empire, and a young African leader, in reference to the inspiration of the American precedent of revolution and nationalism, described America as "my second home."

While the American past helped plot the course of the nationalistic and revolutionary movements that in the last twenty years have produced so much unrest and disturbance in the world, the American present has exerted a very different political influence. This has arisen from two developments: first, the acceptance by the American people of the fact that the United States is a major world power and of necessity actively involved in and concerned with the affairs of the world; and second, the cold war with American fears of Communism and Soviet expansionism.

Shaken by what it regarded as threats to world order and stability in Soviet expansionism and fearful of the spread of Communist influence in the world, the United States assumed aggressive leadership in rallying other countries in opposition to these threats. Its principal weapon in this cold war has been the traditional weapon of great powers—armed might.

Much of our economic aid abroad, if we recall, was indirectly geared to a military strengthening of those countries committed to our leadership in this struggle, and a significant portion of our total aid abroad in the postwar years has been directly military in character. By mid-1962 the United States had provided more than thirty-one billion dollars in direct military aid to other countries.

The United States was also the dominant influence in the creation of a number of military alliances and compacts around the globe designed to contain Soviet and Communist influence.

The political impact of these actions was momentous. First, it placed a number of countries, some of long-established historical eminence in the world, in the uncomfortable position of dependence upon the United States—a fact inevitably creating much resentment. Second, it offset the influence of our revolutionary past and created a new image of the United States. By defining membership in the Free World in terms of anti-Communism or anti-

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Sovietism, the United States frequently found itself supporting and maintaining reactionary regimes around the globe. By placing stability and order in the world ahead of the achievement of social and political democracy, we placed ourselves across the path of the most significant movement of the twentieth century and found ourselves for the first time in our history looked upon as a defender of the status quo—a far cry from our traditional role as promoter and encourager of change.

Out of this has developed the current image of America as villain, as defiler of its own past, as a basically self-centered nation willing to sacrifice democracy, and its advancement abroad, in the interests of a world stability designed to guarantee our own security at the expense of the continued oppression and exploitation of millions of ordinary people elsewhere whose very aspirations for improvement of their condition had, in the first place, been so frequently stirred by the American historical example. This image of the United States as no longer the champion of democracy has also been fed in the postwar years by a number of circumstances within the United States, particularly by the status of the Negro in our society. The rising Negro revolution, calling worldwide attention to the condition of the Negro in America, provided daily challenges to the official American effort to portray ourselves as the defenders of democracy around the world—challenges exploited by the Soviet Union and its associates, and highly disturbing to those colored peoples around the globe who were seeking new and better ways of life for themselves and who were, as President Sukarno of Indonesia said at the Bandung conference of 1955, "united by a common detestation of racialism."

No man can exercise leadership who does not basically reflect the desires of those he leads. This also holds true for nations.

In the twentieth century, and particularly since World War II, the desires of the vast majority of the peoples of the world have been shaped by and reflected in three movements: the utilization of science and technology to develop modern economies and societies that will bring the benefits of industrialism to the common man, the rise of nationalistic sentiments among colonial peoples, and the revolutionary fervor that has sought to relieve age-old social and political oppressions. The United States has represented in its

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own development and achievement—indeed has been the symbol of—these movements, perhaps more than any other country in the world. We have shown how the physical condition of man may be improved by the application of science and technology. In terms of nationalistic sentiment and revolutionary drive we have demonstrated by the example of our own history how men may achieve social and political elevation. And by the end of the Second World War, the United States as symbol and exemplar of these movements possessed a reservoir of goodwill, admiration and respect perhaps unequaled by any nation in history. Our potential for promoting the betterment of the human condition was large beyond measure.

But, by and large, that potential was lost in the maze of the cold war, and the unreasoning fear, the arms race, and the political blindness that too often characterized this conflict.

The rising tide of anti-Americanism throughout the world rests in part, of course, upon older images of the United States as materialistic, as business-dominated, even in some places as threat to the status quo. But primarily it rests upon something new—the conviction of many that the United States has somehow forsaken its traditional role as the idealistic nation, as the country that represents the dream of the common man for a better life for himself and his family, as the society that has always sympathized with the underdog and with those struggling to improve their position. In the view of many, in short, we no longer seem to speak the language of the oppressed. It may be worth noting, by way of general example, that the Japanese scholar, Shigeto Tsuru, has observed that those Japanese who are most critical of current American policy happen also to be those who hold America's tradition and ideals in the highest esteem.

The present American paradox may perhaps be illustrated by the two crises that at the moment confound much of the world and certainly perplex us—those in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. The architect of our policy in Vietnam, Mr. McGeorge Bundy, has expressed his contempt for those liberals who, he has said, favored American intervention in the crisis of World War II and yet now argue for American withdrawal from the crisis of Southeast Asia. This, it seems to me, is missing the point. For inter-

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vention in the sense of passive involvement in and concern for the affairs of others has always been an inescapable fact of life for Americans. And intervention in the sense of active involvement in and concern for the affairs of others has been an inescapable fact of life for the world since 1900, for we are all now, in this One World of the twentieth century, involved in the affairs of everybody else. Thus the real question is intervention for whom and for what purpose and in what ways. We tend to forget, for example, that our involvement in the Second World War was intervention against oppressive and intolerable regimes and for the liberation of oppressed peoples. Now, however, we find ourselves intervening on the side of a series of governments in South Vietnam that few can possibly believe either represent the interests of the Vietnamese people or are devoted to democratic ideas. Although in the Dominican crisis there is a legacy of suspicion and hatred of American imperialism absent in Southeast Asia, the problem is basically the same, and the question remains unanswered why we neglected to intervene in that unhappy country to protect the constitutional government of President Bosch when it was overthrown by a military junta in 1963 and yet now intervene to protect the military junta from challenge by the Dominican people. It should be easy to understand, even if one feels it unjust, why disillusionment with America is a by-product of our role in these crises.

In conclusion, may I pose in very general terms this matter of our impact and image abroad.

Some years ago, a student of mine from overseas found himself at a party in the course of which the conversation turned to a discussion of the various imaginary peoples in literature—the Amazon women, leprechauns, Lilliputians, and so forth—and when asked to name his favorite imaginary peoples, he replied without hesitation, "The Americans."

For much of our history, and for a great many people, there is no doubt that America has had an unreal, almost fictional aura about it. The wealth of America, whether from the land or the machine, has really been so great that, especially for people perpetually cursed with very little, we have often seemed a country rich even beyond the imagination. And it is worth remembering

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that there really were immigrants who came to this country expecting to find the streets paved with gold. Moreover, for many people, especially those bent by the burdens of class and caste, the free and open relationship between Americans and their easy access to decision-making by the march to the polls reflected a social and political equality most men merely dream about. Nor should we forget that the American fascination with and reliance upon gadgets to do even the simplest of tasks, so that it often became more complicated to do something by gadget than by hand, have also given to our life an element of the unreal and the fictional. Even American violence—the Indian on the warpath, the gunman of the West, the gangster of the city—lost its brutal reality when viewed from across the Atlantic or the Pacific, and acquired a romantic appeal not granted, for instance, to the Spanish Inquisition.

Even today America the mythical land remains, and it will be some time before this image of America fades away. In many respects it will be a loss when that happens, for there is something in the human heart that dearly loves the story that is larger than life.

But it is undeniable that in the twentieth century and especially since World War II this image of America is undergoing change. As science and technology are more widely applied to men's lives around the world, as industrialism expands and extends its benefits to more and more societies, as political and social progress broaden their coverage of human affairs, as, in short, people become more like us, then America as pioneer and high example of these achievements will, so to speak, come down to earth. And the price of losing our wings will be well worth paying. Indeed I would think that our major role in the world in the years ahead should be to work a great deal harder than we do now to bring all this about.

But at the same time there is a less attractive aspect of this process of change that sees America becoming more real than dreamlike in the eyes of others. And this is the increasing American tendency to act in ways typical of powerful peoples—that is, to use our vast physical power to force our own views and ways upon as much of the world as possible, to impose our own definition of what is good and right, and in the process to deny those very quali-

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ties for which we were so admired in the past. We live, of course, in a world plagued by immense and complex problems, not one of which—poverty, illiteracy, injustice, national hatred—can be solved by force. They are problems the solution or resolution of which must depend upon the employment of man's ingenuity in ways other than force: in technology, in science, in economic organization, in political skills, in government—ways in which America has traditionally had the most to offer. Few peoples, I think, would expect or even want America to withdraw from the arena of world decision-making, but I would imagine that most peoples would prefer this country to retire brute force to our last line of defense and to bring to the front our recognized social, political, economic and cultural power, the exercise of which has always reflected that concern of ours for human welfare for which we have been so admired in the past. I would imagine that most peoples, particularly those impatient with the present and in a hurry to enter upon the future, would prefer to see us once again affirm not the privileges of great nations, but the rights of ordinary men.

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Sleeper in the Valley

(after Rimbaud)

JOSEPH SNELLER

There's a spot of green where a brook sings
And silver dew hangs crazily on the grass,
Where the sun, over the haughty mountain,
Gleams: A tiny valley where the light bubbles over.

A young soldier, hatless, open-mouthed,
His nape bathed in the fresh blue grass
Sleeps: He is stretched in the grass beneath an elm,
Pale on his green couch under the streaming light.

Feet in thick boots, he sleeps. Smiling like
A child taken sick, he reckons up dreams.
Nature, cradle him warmly; He is cold.

Odors no longer tremble at his nostrils;
He sleeps in the sun, hand on his breast,
Tranquil. Two red holes pierce his right side.

✪ Author and poet JOSEPH SNELLER has been dividing his writing time between a long poem and the final chapters of a book on the film directors and novelists of the "Nouvelle Vague." The book is scheduled for publication early in 1966.

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The Lizard

Philip Legler

I never knew how to get rid of him.
Nights, sometimes, he crawled in my room
Along the baseboard, his scales flashing in the moonlight;
Once I discovered him sliding out the cold air duct
Like some strange fish whose history
Swam in my dreams, leaving his shadow.

One summer, finding him crouched on the porch railing,
I stared at him to change his color,
Melt him into the splintered wood.
When he sat like a stone, but eyeing me,
I ran and looked in the mirror just to make certain,
Rubbed, three times, my rabbit's foot.

Then returned later, having gained confidence
And a magnifying glass to bargain with the sunlight,
Set him aflame like a leaf or bug.
One day, seeing the dog bark low at the fireplace,
I may have helped him escape, opening
The flue in the chimney the bats got down.

Months after, I found him again and again
But was never positive about his shape or size;
Usually he grew larger, flicking his tail,
Like something you keep to yourself.
Not seeing him for days, I thought he was a frog,
He looked so puffed up. Of course, he was older.

Now I have conquered him, so small a thing,
And publicly announce I have kept him with me

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All these years, a secret locked in a closet.
Admitting him, I know he'll diminish
Like a reptile grown in a science-fiction movie.
If I tickle his stomach he goes to sleep in my palm.

My Uncle Billy Darrow taught me that,
Just as he taught me to shoot a gun.
But yesterday has a way of swimming upstream,
Bolting the doors or projecting itself on a wall.
It's hard to bring it down to scale:
Even in my hand, he casts a small shadow.

✪ PHILIP LEGLER is the author of *A Change of View,* a collection of poetry published in 1964. Mr. Legler teaches at Sweet Briar College.

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The Writer in Contemporary Society

STORM JAMESON

IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, that nervously alert voice of English letters, the *Times Literary Supplement,* compared the precarious situation of the arts in the twentieth century to the survival, only as a luxury, of the horse.

> They also have been made redundant by technological progress, and the first task of criticism ought to be to discover how this came about and what precisely has replaced them. So far most of those who practise and write about the arts have been reluctant to face this situation frankly, partly because they have the excuse that novels—even thrillers—are not yet actually written by computers, but mainly because no class of people is enthusiastic about writing its own obituary. . .

We are being invited, *sans façon,* to attend the deathbed, if not yet the funeral, of all arts that depend on an individual hand and brain. The novelist is the humblest of the named victims of progress, but the chart of his critical condition will apply, with inessential differences, to every form of imaginative writing. Moreover, an illness is most easily studied in its advanced stages, and not even the most self-complacent of novelists will pretend that today the novel is better than an interesting invalid.

Since the death of Proust, the novels that matter very much would fit into a small bookcase, in which room will have to be found for *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake,* although these two latter-day epics, far from injecting new energy into the novel, led it into the splendid but airless museum reserved for works that require endless explanation. Joyce strained the resources of language in *Ulysses* to a limit he could overstep only by breaking language down and reshaping it to convey a highly subjective and eccentric vision of reality. In *Finnegans Wake,* the one major work of fiction

✪ STORM JAMESON, the English novelist, is author most recently of *The Road from the Monument* and *The Blind Heart.* Among her other books are *The Green Man, The Hidden River* and *The Writer's Situation, and Other Essays.*

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that more or less obeys Mallarmé's dictum that the world exists to be made into a book, he handles words much as an abstract painter uses line and color, to embody a reality intelligible only in reference to the workings of the writer's mind, not by its relation to the objective world—of which other minds are part. His method is the antithesis of surrealism: he uses immense intellectual ingenuity—consciously—to distort the structure of language, bending logic to make a hare of logic. This particular revolt against the pinchbeck rhetoric and devitalizing clichés of a mass civilization has never been pushed farther. Like a great cairn, *Finnegans Wake* marks the end of a road. Reflecting coldly, I believe that Joyce did literature a disservice by the skill, persistence, courage, with which he toiled at the dismembering of language, one of the thin walls humanity has built up over centuries against its own brutal and destructive impulses. Against the very impulse that, in a few days in August 1944, destroyed all the great libraries of Warsaw. With one half my mind I admire Joyce as the bold experimenter; the other half sees him as the nihilist, the antihumanist, the atomizer of meaning.

A really lively art can support any number of violent rebels, and even any number of clever charlatans and drugged self-dupes. If these were all it ailed, the novel would not be in a galloping decline. It is declining in every sense. In the mass of ephemeral novels published every year, a small number of works by serious writers compete for attention; a few of these live out the year, the rest die quickly of neglect, and there is no resurrection morning. The figures for the last five years show a steady turning away from fiction to biography, history, popular science, political affairs, in short to what an innocent reading public thinks of as truth. The number of nonfiction books rises every year. To complete the picture of a modern sweated industry, note that very few novelists earn, by their novels, more than the wage of a junior clerk, and must supplement it by any means their ingenuity suggests.

Apologists for the failing health of fiction are apt to blame the complexity of the world, so appalling as to crush the energy even of a Tolstoi. A respectable excuse and, I think, a superficial one. No great novelist of the past ever did attempt a total picture: Tolstoi himself offered only a vivid intimation of the whole. I am con-

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vinced that none of the difficulties that dismay the imaginative writer when he looks about him was past prayer until they were increased, immeasurably, by technical developments. If the arts really have been made redundant, are on the point of becoming, like the horse, a rare survival, it is the new mediums of communication—radio and television and, on a different level, in a subtler way, the development of the computer—that are the effective cause. These sacred monsters cannot replace the individual artist, but they can displace him, can elbow him out of the market and deflect him from his proper business. And to a noticeable degree they are doing so.

The truth is that the threat to the novel is one aspect of a profound change in the structure itself of society. We are living on the frontiers of an age in which the printed book is being overtaken by the new electronic mediums very much as the handwritten manuscript was overtaken by the invention of print. The process is only beginning and will probably never be total, but already those of us to whom it has not occurred to think that literacy can rest on anything but the habit of private reading are as out-of-date as a medieval scholar who disliked the look of a printed page and clung to his parchments. A wireless talk means little to me until I have read it in print. Television wearies me by forcing me to attend to it with the ear I use for external noises and an eye unused to sudden shifts of focus. My nervous system rejects a forced involvement with the nervous systems of millions of my contemporaries. It rebels against the—to me—demoralizing pressure of information thrust on it from all sides. No doubt I could train myself to take in by ear more than I do. But that is not the point. Nor is it the point that nine-tenths of the entertainment and instruction offered is of the crudest and shoddiest. It is plainly not because miracles of technology are used to disseminate rubbish that they are the serious novelist's enemies: he has always—since the onset of semiliteracy—had to keep his head above the flood of trash. The new mediums are his enemies *because they exist.* Because they are creating mental habits that are not simply unlike, but directly opposed to the habits of a man who sits down to take part in a dialogue with the writer of the book in his hand. The

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point, the crucial point, is the incessant flow of sounds and images into millions of eyes and ears, and the instantaneous appearance to them of events taking place anywhere in the world. Radio and television speak to the mass man, to a mass that is learning new habits with the docile facility of a circus pony, and we attend to them as, in the days before newspapers, villagers attended to the town crier. Or, if we do not attend, we are deliberately holding ourselves aloof, trying stubbornly to keep the habits of a past age, trying to erase the electronic factor from our lives, to retreat into an artificial oasis of silence, an invisible monastery. It can be done, but at a psychological cost not everyone is willing to pay.

Whether the benefits of living in one vast mechanically begotten community will outweigh the loss of privacy and separateness is not my concern. I am concerned with the possible disappearance, or four-fifths eclipse, in such a world, of the imaginative writer, novelist, poet, who is only able to share his deepest and subtlest experience of life with as many of his fellows as are prepared to wait patiently for him to unfold it at length, with the strictest honesty of which he is capable. An effort he will never be able to make through the public mediums of the electronic age. Never.

Nor is this the whole story. The devaluation of the written word begun, with the potent help of Early Bird, by loudspeaker and television screen, is obvious, measurable and just might be remedied. The psychological effect of the computer, of machines that extend the human brain as massively as television and radio extend our eyes, ears and nervous systems, is ambiguous, incalculable and infinitely more disturbing. To the individual writer, there is something obscurely menacing about a machine complex enough to solve problems of its own devising, to learn through its own mistakes. Sheepishly and irrationally he resents and is overawed by it. His sense of being in some way threatened is not attached to anything the computer does that actually affects him. Even what seems to, even translation by computer, is of less importance to the imaginative writer than to the student of semantics. Obviously, as the machines are further developed and as we deepen our understanding of linguistics, the usefulness of autonomous translation will increase. But no writer believes that the computer

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can be programmed to imitate completely the way our minds use language. A first-class human translator draws subconsciously on a vast hinterland of ambiguities of sense and sensation. The process is one of unimaginable delicacy. But why speculate on the intellectual and artistic bankruptcy that would be implied by an attempt to transfer to an electronic brain this particular aspect of consciousness?

I am skeptical, too, about the value of computer technique in literary criticism. Certainly it can save time and routine drudgery in research: what I mistrust is its use, merely because it is there, on work the living mind can do better. Or on work of no literary value. On such solemn frivolities as the recent use, in the English department of an American university, of a computer to search for the themes in Act 2, Scene 1, of *Hamlet*. The time spent programming the machine would have been a great deal more intelligently spent searching for them by the light of reason and critical sensibility. And when an English scientist assures me that in the foreseeable future computers will be used to paint pictures and write poems, I am politely certain that her knowledge of what goes on in the mind of painter and poet is laughably crude. The slow and infinitely complex process of *improvisation* that is great literature can be mimed by a machine, but not conceived by it, not given breath. There are two sorts of possible communication. There is the communication of information, which television in one way and the computer in others can deliver with incomparable speed and efficiency. And there is the communication of a profound insight into the human condition. I am sure, in the marrow of my writer's bones, that this will not be provided by even the most advanced machines.

Nevertheless I think of the computer and its yet unrealized potentialities with discomfort and an equivocal sense of being spiritually diminished. And this is not, not in any degree, started up by puerile nonsense about computer poetry and paintings. Its roots are deeper—in an impotent and less than half-conscious resentment of the god in the machine. A man-made god, but overwhelmingly powerful. Endowed by human ingenuity with inhuman powers.

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An inhuman power—one felt as inhuman—breeds submission, apathy, boredom or rebellion. The literary rebel who can imagine no other way of outwitting it will turn nihilist. You can see this happening at the moment in the novel, on two levels. On the sophisticated level of the *nouveau roman,* and in the growth, or irruption into daylight, of the pornographic novel. The first is an urbane, highly intellectual and fragile growth. Its most self-explanatory practitioner, Alain Robbe-Grillet, sees human beings as a kaleidoscope of moods, and communication between them little more coherent than a conversation on crossed telephone wires; to pass judgment on their acts, thoughts, feelings, is senseless or impossible. This irrational philosophy lays an ax to the roots of any intelligible vision of reality, so that by an ironical paradox the New Novelists devalue man, rob him of his identity, as fatally as does the most menacing product of technology.

At a first glance it seems absurd to see the writers of the newest erotic or pornographic novel as part of the revolt against a civilization in which machines are felt to be more than a match for men. But these doctrinal works, from *Lady Chatterley's Lover* downward, a long way down, to William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch,* are treated seriously as literature—not only by their authors. (These—since writers write in the hope of being read—no doubt see them *also* as a chance to be heard above the roar of a million television sets.) Critics are prone to see them as "a gesture of liberation, intellectual and moral." I don't suggest that these critics are out of their minds; I suggest that they are the innocent dupes of an *ad hoc* critical theory which lays down that all dimensions of human experience are equally worth a writer's devoting energy and brains to explore them. All without exception. This is worse than silly, it is sentimental or hysterical. Clinically reported acts of sex are of interest, no doubt, to an ignorant adolescent, if such exists. What is infinitely more interesting, revealing, and a great deal more difficult, is to discover and give a lucid account of the emotions involved, their strength, effect, circumstances, the slow corrosion of Anna Karenina's life by her passion for Vronski, not the method she used to avoid pregnancy. Sexual emotion is the most complex of human impulses, the great fugue of existence;

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hunger, ambition, parenthood, the controlled ferocities of artist and scientist, can at any time, in any man or woman, elbow it aside; none of them equals it in complexity and range of force. What puzzles me—and fills me with real doubts of their competence—is the reverent attitude of so many critics to the anything but genial insistence in a novel on familiar details of sex and excretion. Are they afraid of being thought timid, or of missing a vogue? Or only indulging in what the French call *la blague sérieuse,* prepared to drop the poor pornographer the moment the wind changes. No matter. What does matter is that the extreme example, so far, of the school, the novels of William Burroughs, greeted by reviewers and generously befuddled fellow-writers as "one of our greatest living novelists," are a sharp reminder that a counterrevolution is as likely to get out of hand as any form of social violence. It goes far beyond the obligatory clinical scenes, to turn on and destroy the human instincts themselves. What is baffling is that there are intelligent people willing to accept as literature the efforts of a writer so disgusted by his physical humanity that he labors to make it dull and disgusting to a reader. They would be better employed trying to decide why he hates himself. He is rebelling, yes. It is easy to see against what. But for what? If the author of *Naked Lunch* had wished to cut off at their source the sensual springs of life, could he have devised a surer way? An attack on conventions—which can be gay and salutary and life-giving—begins to shock me when it becomes an attack on our self-respect and decent self-love. The roots joining a literature of self-contempt and self-hatred to the worlds of Belsen and Auschwitz run underground, but they run.

And it is all futile. The electronic age is with us for good. We can't, as writers, go back to a pretechnical age, to an image of man as Homer or Dante or Turgenev saw him. The problem for the writer, as for the man in the street, is not how to escape from the machine, but how he can be free in relation to the machine. And here I am at a loss. I do not believe that the mediums of mass communication can ever be used to transmit the imaginative vision of a new Proust, a new Kafka, a new Tolstoi. It is inevitable that, for a mass audience, emotive language will always have to be thinned

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down, robbed of the utmost delicacy, the utmost subtlety, of which a good writer is capable. Language is memory and metaphor, it stores up the experience of the race and translates it into another form. The distinction drawn between speech and writing is, at the deepest level—that is, at an Atlantic depth below the possibilities of wireless—empty. Behind the written word, there is an oral tradition; the echoes go back to the child hearing his mother's voice saying *bread* or *sleep*. The most intimate meanings of an English word elude the inner ear of a man born to use another tongue. And it is on this deepest sense of language that poetry and precise subtle prose call. We learned, some few centuries ago, to translate the printed word back into these buried subtleties of sound and sense, to send them through the eye to the inner remembering ear of a reader who is attending not only to the words but to their endless echoes in his own experience. This same reader may, as scientist or scholar, draw on the prodigious memory of an electronic brain. He knows, or he should, that there are memories on which he cannot draw except in the age-old communion of one man speaking to another, without haste, in solitude. The gap between what the writer means and what he is able to say can only be closed in silence, in the silence during which the attentive eye sees and the attentive brain hears the word on the page.

One thing is certain. The serious writer's situation is more difficult than it was only two decades ago. With long practice we might, in time, have learned to use the radio to hear all the subtlety of which words are capable. I don't believe this, but it is conceivable. But now that the picture of an event can be flashed across the globe in the moment it happens, not only are we forced to endure an assault on all our senses at once, but we endure it in a world reduced to one pair of ears, one pair of eyes straining to catch the image as it flies, like children watching an airplane. At this primitive level of communication there is no place for the writer to act as interpreter or to answer the questions the television audience does not ask: What does my life mean? What is real? What is the value of a single human being? Questions the great novelists thought themselves competent and compelled to answer.

What it comes down to is simple and awful. The shock tactics

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of the pedantic immoralists, the Mailers and Burroughses, are self-defeating: the first scream startles, the tenth bores. The serious novelist has one vital resource, one only, in his effort to make himself heard above the strident electronic voices. That is, to create in depth, to uncover with more and more lucidity his total response to experience, to squeeze into words more meanings than can be broadcast or televised or put into a computer. What this involves for him is so exacting that few care to look it in the face. He will be forced—if he is to survive as a novelist, and not merely as an overwhelmed spectator of the modern world, or a clever amusing startling anything-you-like literary haberdasher, with a weather eye on his new powerful competitors—to write fewer novels. Far fewer. Which will be good for his soul although not, if he hoped to live by them, for his belly.

As a serious-minded novelist who has made a living by writing far too much, I say that the habit of writing to pay the bills is deplorable, pitiable, foolhardy—choose your own term. This was always true. It is a hundredfold truer now, when your craftsman writer is in competition with machines that can outbid him in diversity of entertainment on every level but the highest. In the near future there will be no level wholly free for him *except* the highest, no unoccupied place for a whole-time novelist but the one that can only be filled by a master, able to answer the questions, about birth, death, love, ambition, cruelty, that will be no use putting to the most carefully programmed computer or hoping to hear answered in the television studio for the flapping ears of a million listeners.

What the embryo novelist ought to be told is: Earn your living in any way that does not draw on your imagination, your respect for words, and write your novel slowly, over unlimited time, enriching it by what you learn as you go. Be prepared to wait ten years to produce your *summa mundi,* your vision of human nature caught between the furies of its instincts and the pitiless dynamics of society, your quintessential report from the depths. You need not even be a great innovator. If you can only say what you have to say in a new form, however outrageously revolutionary, do so. And if you prefer the traditional forms, use them as you like. But

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look to your tools. Words that have been poured out in torrents of cheap print, or by a million reverberating machines, become meaningless. When too much is said too quickly, by men or machines, or by men using machines, the danger of slipping into jargon is hideously easy; your perpetual task, today, tomorrow, forever, is the sharpening of language into a more and more precise and flexible instrument, as far removed as possible from the automatic response, the empty abstraction, the flabby half-exact phrase.

I am talking, need I say, about a writer who is the equal in his field of Einstein in his. You don't expect an Einstein to make a statement of his findings every twelvemonth. Why expect it of a novelist worth reading?

I was born suspicious of dogma. But I am dogmatically sure that the spread of automation into one field of human activity after another desperately needs a powerful human counterbalance. Lacking it, the cancer of dehumanization and boredom is going to spread and spread. In a world on the way to becoming one vast tribal encampment, hemmed in by the compulsions of collectivity, drugged by the torrent of information and entertainment pouring from the ever-open jaws of radio and television, we need as never before the slower and more lasting stimulus of solitary reading.

We are in danger of becoming exiles in our world, dwarfed by the great machines and the great buildings in which we do not worship. But we are not to be saved by any and every sort of writing. It was never more necessary than it is today for the writer to look cruelty in its face—if he is mature enough, clearheaded and sanely sensuous enough to do it without shuddering or wallowing or exploiting it for effect, or becoming hysterical and screaming at the top of his voice. We shall never grasp in its final terror and grandeur the reality of, let's say, Auschwitz, until it has been fused in the imagination of an unborn Dostoevski. The agony of Lear, the death of Antigone, the end of Mother Courage, are terrible—and exalting and exciting because they convince us that a few men and women can endure anything. The indecencies of *Naked Lunch* are enervating, clumsy and unpardonably boring.

We feel rightly that *Undertones of War* is worth a great deal more than most modern novels. But do we feel that it is worth

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more than *War and Peace*? We prefer actuality to let's pretend, but do we prefer it to a work in which the characters are the vehicles of an otherwise unimpartable self-knowledge, images of a reality that cannot get itself said in any other or easier form? What may very well not survive, killed by technological progress, is the merely good novel. What remains a vital necessity are the few great novels, written and to be written, that—in a sense below and above anthropology and archaeology—are human history.

Do I seem to regard the electromagnetic discoveries which have revolutionized our world, especially the computer, as antihuman in some mystical way? I don't. There is nothing intrinsically antihuman about a device that allows knowledge to be stored in a form that makes it easily accessible to scholars, scientists, and students of linguistics. (Provided they don't use it to suffocate us with more doctoral treatises.) "There is a place for everything when everything is in its place." A place for that extension of our brain and senses which is the computer and Early Bird, and a place for the one-to-one communion in which we come face-to-face with ourselves. Neither our dead nor our unborn can reach us by any but this single living channel, this naïvely human miracle.

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With Cherry Coloured Hose

DANIEL FRANKO GOLDMAN

with cherry coloured hose
and a Mediaeval mind
he set out to climb the
precipice and
won.
for such is this
animal that lesser woodland deities
bow before It, and the
flowers
throw pollen to the
winds for sheer joy.

as the wind rises
the light dims to the second place
and
as
it is willed
calmness returns.

we are all hyenas
said
pseudo-Aeschylus
to
the vulture
as he got on the
train
last stop: "PROMETHEUS"
said the conductor.
the vulture got out.

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Self-Control and Political Potency: Gandhi's Asceticism

SUSANNE HOEBER RUDOLPH

I KNOW OF NO COUNTRY whose people do not in some way worry about the private morality of their public leaders. Gossip about the highly placed is never merely gossip; it embodies the assumption that there may be some continuity between a man's personal self-indulgence or self-constraint and his capacity to act disinterestedly in matters of state and the general welfare. But in modern times we have come to assume that the processes of differentiation that characterize our lives and touch all our affairs have made private morals less relevant for public action. It is assumed that if a senator or maybe even a President pays attention to ladies other than his wife, that will not affect his capacity to manage affairs of state—provided he conducts himself with some circumspection and gives no cause for scandal. The differentiation of realms of conduct suggests to us that performance in one realm need not be affected by performance in others.

Certain constitutional assumptions also lie behind the belief that in a public man private behavior is to a point irrelevant to public. It has been the predisposition of the Western political tradition, as it has concerned itself with constraints upon the arbitrary conduct of rulers, to rely upon external rather than internal restraints, on institutional rather than ethical limits to control the wielders of power. The emphasis on institutional limitations—the balancing of branches of government or of class interests or of church and state—goes back to Greek and Roman thought, and

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never lost its power even during the more ethically-oriented periods of medieval polity. Institutional limits have not, to be sure, been the exclusive means of restraint. There have been historical moments, and there have been political theorists in the West who have emphasized the virtues kings must practice, and sought to make them explicit, hoping that ethical restraints and their acceptance by kings might act as a curb on arbitrary action. But in the main, emphasis has been on institutional rather than ethical restraints.

In the light of these assumptions about the differentiation of public and private life, of the relative irrelevance of private morality for responsible public behavior, Gandhi's autobiography, the book he called *The Story of My Experiments with Truth,* poses a puzzle for his Western readers. They think they are to read the autobiography of a political leader. Instead they find something so heavily concerned with the Mahatma's "private" activities that it might better have been entitled *Confessions.* Confessions are acceptable in saints, like Augustine, or in professional sensualists, like Sade, or understandable in a tortured exhibitionist like Rousseau. But why in a political man? The relative privacy and reserve of Nehru's autobiography seems more appropriate, not merely as a matter of taste, but as a matter of the life emphasis suitable for a public man.

The Western reader is apt to conclude that the *Experiments* are in fact evidence that the saintly man mattered more than the politician, and that Gandhi cared more for his private virtue than his public efforts. But that conclusion rests on the belief, quite pervasive in Western estimates of Gandhi, that saintly striving and political effectiveness must conflict, cannot be merged, and that anyone who seeks both must be a fraud either in his pretensions to be a politician or in his pretensions to be a saintly man.

The Experiments in Truth seems to me evidence for different conclusions. In the Indian context it is very much a *political* document, central to Gandhi's political concerns in a double sense, the function it served for him and that which it served for his public. It is from his "experiments in the spiritual field" that he believed he had "derived such power as I possess for working in the political field." And it was not only he who believed this. Many of his im-

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mediate and distant followers regarded his political potency as a product of his personal virtue. And when he wrote the autobiography, as weekly installments for his Gujerati journal *Navajivan,* in the early part of his Indian career, but after he had already made his name as leader of the political protests of the twenties, he gave wider currency to his attempts at self-perfection, very likely with the effect that his audience felt further reassured that the conditions of his political potency had been long preparing and had been severely tested.

Gandhi's belief that private morality had a public consequence has substantial support in classical Hindu political thought. That thought has steadily emphasized the significance of inner restraints on rulers and only weakly developed the concern with external ones. The *dharmasastras* and the epics relied not upon countervailing institutions but upon ethical commands to guarantee the public spirit of traditional kings. (In practice, however, countervailing institutions did act as irregular restraints.) Ethical commands had a private and a public variant. A king was commanded in private life to restrain his lust, control and master his passions, live simply, and rule his subjects justly. The *Manusmriti* declares

> that king [is] a just inflicter of punishment, who is truthful, who acts after due consideration, who is wise, and who knows the respective value of virtue, pleasure and wealth. . . . For a king who is attached to the vices springing from love of pleasure, loses his wealth and his virtue, but he who is given to those arising from anger, loses even his life. Hunting, gambling, sleeping by day, censoriousness, excess with women, drunkenness, an inordinate love for dancing, singing, and music, and useless travel are the tenfold set of vices springing from love of pleasure.

It is the king who overcomes attachment, who reigns with mind serene, who achieves that expunging of self-interest that allows him to judge clearly and fairly the interest of others. (A problematic assumption, to be sure. There is no reason to believe that such virtue may not itself become a vested interest, seeking to propagate itself among subjects who would live more "attached" lives, or giving rise to that *hubris* of the disinterested that their virtue gives them ground to prescribe for others. An imposed prescription may not be loved any better for being imposed by one who has no "in-

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terest" except in virtue.) The public variant of the ethic of restraint was the *Rajadharma,* the commands that prescribed for kings what they must or must not do in their public function. There was an implicit assumption that a man who mastered himself could be relied upon to follow *Rajadharma.*

I am not concerned with whether these ethical hopes ever became operational restraints for most kings in distant or recent Indian history. The reputation of Indian princes as a group would lead one to suppose that self-restraint remained an ethic honored as much in the breach as in the realization. And I am not sure but that a reputation for a lively libidinal life may not even have enhanced the status of princes and nobles who afforded commoners a vicarious opportunity to consume and participate in those pleasures that did not usually come their way.

Yet ethical standards that are steadily breached by those to whom they apply need not lose their effectiveness for all that. They remain an ideal, and if someone comes along who can enact the ideal, he may fall heir to all the pent-up hopes that have survived the experience of repeated disillusion; he may, indeed, command the more respect because in the normal course of historical events the standard has remained unfulfilled. It is in this light that the political impact of Gandhi's political experiments with private morality, and the significance of his asceticism, must be understood. If Gandhi lived his private life in public and if his private restraint became a matter of public concern, it was because both he and those who observed him believed that a man's claim to be just, to command others, and to attain the wisdom of a statesman, were proportional to the capacity for self-restraint, for inner restraints.

Apart from the constitutional and restraining function that asceticism was thought to perform, self-restraint was thought to have more positive, power-enhancing functions as well. The practitioner of *Tapasya,* of austerities, was believed to accumulate special powers. The belief rests on what might be called a theory of sexual and moral hydrostatics: the classics suggest, and many Hindus believe, that men are endowed with a certain amount of "life-force," which, if used up in passionate or lustful or self-seeking endeavors, would no longer be available

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for other and higher purposes. The theory in many ways recalls Freud's analogous theory, which, up to a point, sees the capacity for sublimation as directly proportional to the diversion of libidinal impulses from their direct expression. The discontents of restrained self-indulgence are the prerequisite, the motor force, of civilization. The *Manusmriti* states it very graphically·

> But when one among all the organs slips away from control, thereby men's wisdom slips away from him, even as the water flows through the one open foot of a water-carrier's skin.

The theory appears to be no rarefied philosophic construct, but enjoys popular acceptance. Morris Carstairs, in his study of the "twice-born" castes of the traditional Rajasthan village, and Joseph Elder, in his of an Uttar Pradesh village, found much preoccupation with this life-force. Carstair's villagers conceptualized it in a prescientific medical theory as a thick viscous fluid stored in the head; a plentiful quantity of it was considered a prerequisite of fitness and strength. It could be preserved by the practice of celibacy as well as by the careful observance of ritual restraints and commandments, and diminished by carelessness in the observance of the rituals of daily life as well as by sexual self-expression. It could be enhanced not merely by the practice of virtue, but also by the consumption of certain foods. The unworldly devotees, who by their austerity accumulated such substantial quantities of this life-force, were believed to have special powers, to be capable of compelling the environment as ordinary men could not hope to do.

Gandhi fully accepted the essentials of this theory:

> All power [he said] comes from the preservation and sublimation of the vitality that is responsible for the creation of life . . . perfectly controlled thought is itself power of the highest potency and becomes self-acting . . . such power is impossible in one who dissipates his energy in any way whatsoever.

If he had any capacity for compelling the environment, it arose from the practice of *brahmacharya,* of self-restraint; if his capacity failed, it was owing to failures in control.

> It is my full conviction, that if only I had lived a life of unbroken *brahmacharya* all through, my energy and enthusiasm would have been

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a thousand fold greater and I should have been able to devote them all to the furtherance of my country's cause as my own.

When, in the late thirties, Gandhi confronted the possibility that all was not well with the nationalist movement, he characteristically looked for the source of difficulty less in history than in himself. "A Congress leader said to me the other day, '. . . how is it that in quality, the Congress is not what it used to be in 1920-25? It has deteriorated. . .' " Special historical forces were part of the answer but only a part:

. . . there must be power in the word of a *satyagraha* [nonviolent resistance] general—not the power that possession of limitless arms gives, but the power that purity of life, strict vigilance and ceaseless application produce. This is impossible without the observance of *brahmacharya* . . . *brahmacharya* here does not mean merely physical self-control. It means much more. It means complete control over all the senses. Thus an impure thought is a breach of *brahmacharya,* so is anger.

Such complete control—a terrible self-demand—he had failed to achieve; else the movement would not exhibit weakness.

I have not acquired that control over my thoughts that I need for my researches in non-violence. If my non-violence is to be contagious and infectious, I must acquire greater control over my thoughts. There is perhaps a flaw somewhere which accounts for the apparent failure of leadership averted to in the opening sentence of this writing.

The preoccupation with self-restraint has been, of course, not merely an ideal for Indian public men. It is also a much more general cultural ideal for Hindu Indians, its vividness varying by caste and locality, probably stronger among the higher than the lower castes, and among the higher, more significant for those who do not make the more self-expressive *Kshatriya* (warrior-ruler) ideals a part of their system of values. (In fact, it is an ideal that was probably especially significant for the Brahman and Vaisya and Kayasth upper castes who formed so conspicuous a part of Gandhi's devoted shock troops.) Again, while self-restraint is an ideal, enjoined even on the married householder, it is probably more honored in the breach than in the attainment. This felt disparity between the ideal of self-restraint and the capacity to live up to it—a disparity that does not necessarily suggest that Indians are sexier

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than anybody, but rather that they have a greater propensity to formulate ideals beyond the attainment of ordinary human nature—also becomes relevant for the impact of Gandhi's experiments. His achievement of a goal that most Indians accuse themselves of failing to reach, amounted to a sort of vicarious achievement of many people's ego ideal.

The political effect of Gandhian asceticism, then, lay partly in the fact that it coincided with a tenet of classical political theory—a tenet that is still very much alive—about how rulers were restrained, partly in the fact that it coincided with theories about how a man's control over his environment might be enhanced, partly in the fact that it coincided with a personal moral ideal of many Indians. But there is yet another dimension. I suppose that a great leader's capacity to compel his environment must be related to his belief that he can do so. It is such self-confidence, when it manifests itself, that creates the phenomenon social science calls charisma. It involves, on the part of him who possesses it, a belief that he can perform not precisely superhuman deeds, but at least extraordinary ones, as long as his self-confidence lasts; and it produces, among those who perceive that self-confidence—the army calls it command presence—a faith that he can indeed perform extraordinary feats. In a curious way, the psychological chemistry of that relationship between the public man and his constituents is such that in consequence of these beliefs the believers may—if everything else is reasonably favorable—turn out to be right. Followers may, in response to such a leader, be able to mobilize resources within themselves that they cannot and do not ordinarily summon forth, thus justifying the faith that caused them to rise to the occasion in the first place. The psychological logic of this is the reverse of what Freud envisioned in his writings on leadership and mob psychology, the loosening and releasing of men's lowest libidinal denominator in a mass response to an apocalyptic call. It is rather the mobilization in the followers of unsuspected strength and virtues, of superego strivings not previously lived up to, in response to a moral challenge. This is a dimension of the psychology of leadership well worth exploring, by contrast with the pessimistic stress on irrationalism which has pervaded psychological

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approaches to leadership theory. It is, in any case, the summoning forth of elements in both leader and followers not available in the normal course of routine lives, extraordinary elements, and in that metaphorical sense, "magical." Gandhian asceticism lay at the core of the self-confidence he had in himself and of that his followers had in him.

I am not concerned merely with the abstract dimensions of the theory of asceticism, but with the way Gandhi came to the belief that through its practice he might compel the environment. I want to ask how the cultural ideal of asceticism came to mean so much to the private man. It seems fairly evident, as we scan the autobiography and other materials, that Gandhi's extreme fearfulness as a child—he describes himself as hearing ghosts and serpents, and running home from school lest he be teased by his fellows—may have been strengthened under circumstances that also made him suspect his own emerging masculine sexuality. Gandhi was married at the age of thirteen, not an unusual age in the traditional environs of the Indian princely state to which he was born. The event coincided with a stagecoach accident in which his father was seriously injured, never to recover fully. Between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, Gandhi spent a substantial part of his free time nursing and ministering to his father's needs. The father appears to have discouraged the more venturesome and independent side of his son's activities in favor of these serving and nurturing ministrations, which the young Gandhi shared with his mother. A school master, writes Gandhi, "had made gymnastics and cricket compulsory for boys of the upper standard. I disliked both . . . the reason of my dislike for gymnastics was my keen desire to serve as a nurse to my father. As soon as the school closed, I would hurry home and begin serving him. Compulsory exercise came directly in the way. . ." And in case Gandhi's "keen desire" should ever be overweighed by an interest in sports, "my father wrote himself to the headmaster saying he wanted me at home after school. . ."

These restrictions on behalf of nursing, which among other things produced a lifelong love of nursing and medical ministrations in Gandhi—we learn to want to do what we have to do—

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may not have been easy to accept. The young man was described by his older sister as an exceedingly sprightly boy, active, energetic and adventuresome, a boy who liked to get away from home and climb trees and lead his own life. He was, says his sister, "a bit of a problem . . . exceedingly active and energetic. He was never at one place for long. As soon as he was able to walk about, it became difficult to keep track of him. . ." He was not, in short, the sort of boy to whom the homebound tasks of regularly nursing a sick father necessarily came easily and naturally. The mature Gandhi looked back on this experience with a recollection that suggests the consumption of bitter medicine: "When I was younger than you are today," he wrote his son in 1901, "I used to find real enjoyment in looking after my father. I have known no fun or pleasure since I was twelve"—a passage that seems to be saying two things at once. The father was not only demanding but probably inspired both fear and fury; Gandhi recalls that he found him short-tempered, and the sense of unfreedom that occurs in the mature man's accounts of his youth is pervasive: "When they [the parents] are no more and I have found my freedom. . ."; "all happiness and pleasure should be sacrificed in devoted service to my parents."

The parent who constrained may not have been easy to love, or to respect with a full heart. Not only was he short-tempered, but "to a certain extent . . . given to carnal pleasures. For he married for the fourth time when he was over forty." Gandhi's father in fact married only three times; it may be no accident that the son recalled an exaggerated number. It was the mother whose qualities seemed to him admirable, the mother who also sacrificed herself to an invalid requiring much care, whose suffering and self-suffering and self-control he hoped to emulate. Especially self-control.

At the same time, the fear of the father was not enough to deter Gandhi from a most thoroughgoing secret rebellion—during these very nursing years—a rebellion in which he systematically violated all of a conservative Vaishnava and Vaisya family's strongly held views on vegetarianism and other forms of ritual and actual self-control. It was during these years that he conducted experiments in meat eating, smoking and unsuccessful whoring. His venturesomeness and independence survived the parental restraints—in

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secret. There must have been considerable fury behind these attempts; Gandhi in his inner being was quite the reverse of the filial model he defends in the autobiography.

The demands made on Gandhi's filialism are not unique. The relationship between this particular Hindu son and his aging father gives expression to a more general pattern: service to an aging father who remains in charge of a joint family home after his sons have reached maturity and demands at least formal self-effacement of their masculinity and a commitment to devoted service. The pleasures of filial service are real—like many cultural demands that initially require sacrifice and discipline, they themselves become satisfactions. Yet there may be limits to the kind or degree of self-effacement that can be demanded. By the side of the satisfactions, and depending perhaps on the degree of devotion demanded, reside the more or less suppressed discontents of the effacement. Freudian psychology found its first insights in the context of Victorian cultural patternings that probably demanded too much, especially of women, who paid a high price in psychic suffering for what they effaced. It is plausible that the Hindu joint family, especially among the more ascetic sects and castes—like Gandhi's —demands "too much" of at least some sons. It seems likely that Gandhi's particular circumstances—his father's illness and the special demands it created—combined with Gandhi's great sensitivity to the moral demands of his culture, unusually heightened the moral compulsions of filialism and the inner resistance to it, exacerbating the conflict between duty and an insufficiently effaced self. That these events occurred during what a nineteenth-century novel would have called "impressionable years" have placed them centrally in his development.

The circumstances surrounding his father's death, which Gandhi speaks of as a symbol of his shameful moral insufficiency, and which seem to represent a crucial point in his gradual commitment to asceticism, must be read against this context: of a father who commanded the personal ministrations of his son, superseding the claims of a young man's venturesomeness; of a son who showed no rage at these demands, except in the secrecy of his extramural rebellion. The circumstances themselves are quickly re-

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lated: Gandhi, who had spent the afternoon as usual massaging an ailing and sinking father, left him to join his wife in their bedroom—presumably to sleep with her. The possibilities for classic tragedy were enhanced by the fact that his wife was pregnant and therefore, for that time, sexually forbidden. Only a little while later, he was called back to his father's room by an uncle, to find the father had died while he was gone. If "animal passion had not blinded me, I should have been spared the torture of separation from my father during his last moments." And, "this shame of my carnal desire even at a critical hour of my father's death . . . is a blot I have never been able to efface or forget, and I have always thought that although my devotion to my parents knew no bounds and I would have given up anything for it, yet it was weighed and found unpardonably wanting because my mind was at the same moment in the grip of lust." It came as no surprise that the child born after these events died.

The event confirmed Gandhi's readiness to believe that his venturesomeness, especially sexual venturesomeness, was in conflict with his duty to nurse and minister, a belief that he generalized over time into the doctrine that self-expression would conflict with all duty, with his ministering to those who came to depend on him as a public man. His readiness so to interpret the event had the weightiest cultural sanction: it was when men indulged their lusts that they failed their duty, and when they restrained them that they fulfilled it. Furthermore, Indian theories about the expressive life, or rather those versions relevant for the caste and sect from which Gandhi came, provided no humane or sentimental view of sexuality that could have balanced this interpretation. For Gandhi, as for many others of his station, sexuality was virtually an excretory function, not a vehicle of intimacy. If he slept with his wife it was because he was weak and could not control his impurity, not because he loved her and sex was a vehicle for human intimacy. "The husband should avoid privacy with his wife. Little reflection is needed to show that the only possible motive for privacy between husband and wife is the desire for sexual enjoyment." There is much to support such a view of sexuality in the traditional arranged marriage, where respect for the elders obliged the couple to avoid

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each other in the daytime, prevented opportunities for the creation of affection, understanding and reciprocity, of the larger human context; sexuality thus had no opportunity to stand for anything but itself.

To Gandhi it seemed evident that a death had occurred under circumstances whose meaning was unambiguous: it underlined what the young man had already suspected, because of the father's support of ministering rather than boyishly venturesome roles, and the culture's suspicion of "lust"—that sexual self-expression was folly, criminal folly, bearing even, perhaps, some unthinkable relationship to the death. "Lust" had "killed." And worse: in some so far unconfronted recesses of himself, he had "wanted" it to do so.

When the mature Gandhi spoke of self-control, he had in mind not merely the control of his "carnal self," although that was how he often put it. Lust was associated with fury at a father who constrained, and subordinated, and used, a fury that had been well contained, but had expressed itself in rebellion and in that final "fatal" unfilial act of sleeping with a wife when one might have nursed a father. It was this fury, as much as sexual self-expression, that Gandhi sought to control, and pacify. Its energy, as well as that of sex, was to be transformed into something constructive. His commitment to peace was created in part as a path to mastering his internal war. A variety of observers commented over many years on the serenity that often accompanied Gandhi's presence. It was, we must assume, serenity arising not merely out of sensuality mastered, but anger mastered and transformed. To become he "who gives no trouble to the world, to whom the world causes no trouble, who is free from exultation, resentment, fear and vexation" was an ancient path that served Gandhi doubly: as a discernible ideal, the fulfillment of which could bring peace out of the inner strife between filial duty and self-expression; and as a public achievement that could inspire confidence in others.

A simpler explanation of Gandhi's serenity has been suggested from time to time. Ritchie Calder, in *Medicine and Man* writes: "Whenever Mahatma Gandhi was under the stress of the modern world Rauwolfia would restore his philosophic detachment." This explanation seems to have gained a certain currency despite a lack

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of supporting evidence. In view of Gandhi's profound suspicion of all stimulants or tranquilizers (from coffee through opium) as distractions from a moral man's essential task of self-control, and his criticism of any self-control won by shortcuts, even the respectable shortcut some strains of Hinduism offer (avoidance of temptation by withdrawal from society as a wandering ascetic or as a forest recluse), such an explanation seems implausible. The same moral considerations that would have deflected him from becoming a eunuch to control his "lust" would have deflected him from using a tranquilizer to produce serenity. At the level of ethics, serenity assumed for Gandhi the nature of a moral transcendence, not merely freedom from a case of nerves, and its moral significance would have been diminished by the employment of a chemical shortcut. At the level of psychology, Gandhi valued self-control too highly, and feared its loss too much, to risk it for gains in what he would have regarded as a specious serenity, specious because it involved a dulling of perception and the loss of control. The additional difficulty with the argument is that none of the Gandhi literature provides evidence for it; one suspects that an era unfamiliar with the moral remorselessness of a "religious" is too readily hospitable to a chemical explanation.

Gandhi ultimately took the vow of *brahmacharya,* of celibacy, at the age of thirty-seven. His determination to take the vow was reinforced during the Zulu Rebellion in which, as in the Boer War, he formed an ambulance corps, and undertook nursing services, of the sort to which those years of service for his father had accustomed him. Commenting on his frame of mind during the Zulu nursing, he writes: "The work set me furiously thinking in the direction of self-control," the self-control that had so conspicuously failed him when last he nursed. The vow was the culmination of a gradual asceticising of his life which began when he went to London as a young man of nineteen, with a vow to his mother that he would touch neither meat, wine, nor women— those three vices of a good Hindu. It continued with his growing attention to the simple unadorned life, expressed in Phoenix Settlement, the "utopian" colony he founded in South Africa and named after the bird who has no mate, but renews life by a somewhat different

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procedure. There he established a Benedictine sort of discipline, although at Ruskin's inspiration, of the life of labor and simple wants as a path to virtue. Phoenix and the *brahmacharya* vow preceded and were for him indispensable preconditions for his first great nonviolent resistance campaign. "Without Brahmacharya, the Satyagrahi will have no lustre, no inner strength to stand unarmed against the whole world . . . his strength will fail him at the right moment." He prepared himself by these self-imposed disciplines on the assumption, which pervaded his life, that his capacity to compel the environment was related to his self-perfection, which he defined as self-purification of lust, self-interest and anger. Invariably, when things went wrong around him, when he felt helpless to shape events, he would conclude that his impotence in action was the consequence of a lapse into lustfulness, even if it was but a low-grade lustfulness, or anger. He would retreat to fasting and various austerities for further self-preparation, to the renewal of that inner purity that would prepare him to affect external events.

The relationship between Gandhi's asceticism and his belief that through it he might compel the environment is perhaps most sharply illustrated by a series of incidents in his last years that precipitated scandal: he asked several young women co-workers to share his bed. The incidents tend to evoke either a kind of lascivious *Schadenfreude* or a protective silence, depending on the disposition of the observer. A more plausible perspective on these events is to view them as Gandhi's almost desperate attempt to master tragic and overwhelming events, using an extreme version of an old remedy, and relying on the reduced resources of an old man. The events coincide with a frightful two-year period from 1946 to 1948 when, in the midst of the partition bloodshed, he became at seventy-seven what Lord Mountbatten called a One Man Boundary Force, and brought something like peace to Bengal. He began his work in the Muslim majority area of Noakhali, where Hindus were being slaughtered, and continued in Bihar, where Hindus killed Muslims. The work was desperately taxing. His walks took him through riot-devastated villages, over difficult countryside, and among people who had lost their nearest through the

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ghastly brutalities neighbors practiced upon neighbors. Noakhali deeply shook his serenity: "I find that I have not the patience and technique needed in these tragic circumstances; suffering and evil often overwhelm me and I stew in my own juice," and again "the happenings in Noakhali succeeded in upsetting me; for there are moments when my heart gives way to anxiety and anger." Nirmal Bose, who worked with him in those days, speaks of him as preoccupied with a way to cope with these events—evidently as much the inner events, the wavering of serenity, the rise of anger, as the external events, the bloodshed all around. His capacity to affect the internal, he was confident, rested on his capacity to control the other. Evidently desperate events required desperate remedies. He warned his friends that he was thinking of a bold and original experiment, "whose heat will be great."

He asked Manu Gandhi, his nineteen-year-old grandniece, to share his bed. He appears to have regarded the matter at one and the same time as a test of his "lust control," whether as a man he could withstand temptation, and of his success in creating in himself the feelings and perceptions of a mother, kin to woman, a test that suggests a certain ambiguity of self-definition. "Manu Gandhi, my grandniece, shares the bed with me, strictly as my very blood . . . as part of what might be my last *Yajna* [sacrifice]," he wrote Acharya Kriplani. He had always held, in sharp contrast to some more orthodox views, that self-control won by removing oneself from temptation through withdrawal from humanity was worthless. Only self-control in the midst of temptation was worthy. Now he evidently increased temptation to test worthiness the more. His activities were no secret, although many of his warmest adherents wished that they were. He discussed the matter in two prayer meetings in February 1947, telling his audience—the Muslims among whom he was working for peace—that his granddaughter (niece) shared his bed, that the prophet had discounted eunuchs who became such by an operation, but welcomed those who became so by prayer. The ensuing scandal seems to have made his task in Noakhali more difficult, and a number of his co-workers left him. These events, if anything, confirmed him in his belief that he had to persist. If he had not the serenity to bear such disapproval surely he

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was not yet master of himself. Bose heard him say to a visitor that

> the courage which made a man risk public disapproval when he felt he was right was undoubtedly of a superior order. . . I get impatient and worried when I am confronted with silly arguments. . . I sometimes flare up in anger. This should not be so. I am afraid, I am yet far from the state of *sthita prajna* [self-mastery].

These events are not characteristic of Gandhi at the height of his powers, when experiments in self-mastery, while often remorseless and directed at the inner environment, were mingled with a strong common sense concerning their effect on the world around him. But the logic of these events, while executed with the declining moral and psychological perceptions of an old man, bore the stamp of the ascetic thread of his life—that to control his outer environment he must control the inner, by testing it to the utmost limits.

It seems reasonable to relate Gandhi's meticulous concern for diet to his quest for sexual asceticism. He had a horror of food, or rather drink, that threatened to undermine self-control. He was moderate in his criticism of many phenomena of which he disapproved, but wholly immoderate in his concern with temperance: "Drugs and drink are the two arms of the devil with which he strikes his helpless slave into stupefaction and intoxication." This is not an unusual point of view in men who place a high value on self-restraint. What is a little less obvious is the significance of his concern with *food*. The cultural context of the concern is the close connection Indians make between what goes on at either end of the alimentary canal and ritual status. An extremely fastidious management of both input and output is valued by higher castes, and a less fastidious is allowed to the lower. It is possible—although the evidence I have comes from a source that I have not been able to verify independently—that Gandhi's mother carried this general cultural preoccupation with pollution to extraordinary extremes, deploring that she could not be like the honeybee, which converted all input into the purest output. (In her case, the preoccupation was associated with chronic constipation as it was with Gandhi.) In the Indian cultural setting, the processing of food has not merely im-

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plications for ritual pollution and ritual rank. Food is also violent or nonviolent, vegetarianism representing a moral as well as a sociological procedure.

Apart from this general attentiveness to food, there are certain particular food doctrines of concern to the man of self-restraint. It is generally believed that certain foods, "cool" foods, promote a cool disposition, one that is calm, undisturbed, unaggressive, resistant to lust, while others produce a "hot" disposition, aggressive and lusty. The cool foods were thought to augment that part of life-force conducive to saintly power, the hot that part of life-force given to lust. Ghi (clarified butter) gave one a controlled strength, a power of mind and body that could enable one to perform acts bordering on the divine. While opinion on which precisely are hot and cool foods is not fully consistent, the cool are mainly milk, clarified butter (ghi), curds, vegetables and fruits. Meat and strong spices figure prominently among the hot. The cool list largely overlaps with that perfected by Gandhi and his followers in the twenties, as well as the menu adopted at Phoenix Settlement in South Africa at the beginning of the century. The list of the twenties includes sprouted wheat, sprouted gram, coconut, raisins, lemon, milk, fresh fruit, ghi and honey—except that Gandhi had doubts about milk, which he feared was a stimulant.

"Control of the palate," wrote Gandhi, "is the first essential in the observance of the vow [of celibacy]," and "*brahmacharya* needed no effort on my part when I lived on fruits and nuts alone."

I have taken so much time with this apparently unpolitical subject in order to clarify its political relevance: what appeared to some as sheer food faddism was understood by many Indians, who read or heard about it, as an integral part of Gandhi's efforts at self-mastery, and an index of his progress.

Gandhi's efforts to control his sexuality, to achieve as it were the serenity of neutrality, were furthered by his very explicit feminine identification. "But the manner in which my *brahmacharya* came to me irresistibly drew me to woman as the mother of man . . . every woman at once became sister or daughter to me." He loved nursing; he welcomed all opportunities to practice this skill, acting as midwife at the birth of his fourth son, taking care of his wife and babies

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when they were ill. In his old age, he liked to think of himself as a mother to his grandniece, Manu, the girl who shared his bed as a daughter might her mother's, and who had lost a mother. She has written a book entitled *Bapu—My Mother*. He admired, first in his mother, then in women generally, the capacity for self-suffering. The admiration inspired confidence in women co-workers. When he converted self-suffering into a potent political weapon, through nonviolent resistance and its implication that one would have to suffer violence without retaliation, he immediately concluded that women would have the greatest aptness for this mode of politics. "Woman is the incarnation of *ahimsa* [non-violence]. *Ahimsa* means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering." (Again, perhaps, a curious definition of love.) His belief had, incidentally, enormous consequences for the politicization of Indian women, many of whom took part in public life for the first time during his nonviolent resistance campaigns.

Gandhi built a life on rejecting the aggressive, "masculine," aspect of the human potential, accepting rather the peaceful, communitarian, adaptive one associated—in the West—with the culture of women. In law he adopted conciliation rather than the adversary mode. In politics he opposed partisanship and praised consensus. If I stress Gandhi's feminine identification, I would not, as a friend of the Rector of Justin remarks in the novel of that name, have you jump over a Freudian moon. In a culture that appears, at least in large parts of itself, to distribute somewhat differently among men and women those qualities that the West associates with male and female, effective masculinity seems to be compatible with a broader range of human qualities than we are inclined to assume. "Male" and "female" are not clear and self-evident categories, but open to great variations of cultural patterning. In this context, Gandhi's embracement of a communitarian and peace-seeking ethic and method, "in the manner of women," evoked echoes and responses among a wider constituency. Very likely the choice of a peaceable method of protest, which would, he hoped, unite men rather than drive them asunder, harmonized with the transformation and rechanneling of assertiveness in himself, an assertiveness that remained such, although peaceably patterned.

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Gandhi's asceticism had autobiographical origins in profound doubt about the permissibility of his masculine assertiveness; its cultural origins lay in the enjoinment of lustfulness in virtuous men. But asceticism carried the cultural implication of a higher potency, an implication arising out of a theory of sexual hydrostatics reminiscent of Freudian sublimation theory. He who controls himself might control the environment. When Gandhi pursued the political goal of *swaraj*, self-rule, he meant to teach himself and Indians that only those who could rule themselves—in the sense of self-restraint—could rule themselves—in the sense of controlling their political universe. Gandhi's political effectiveness rested on the fact, among other things, that those who observed his career believed that his self-control would indeed endow him with extraordinary powers to compel the environment. And it rested on the more practical fact that asceticism did bring him peace—not so much from leaping lusts, he probably gave himself too much credit in that direction—but peace from the recollection of the conflict between his own sexuality and his duty to a father. The serenity he achieved by his asceticism was ultimately among his strongest assets as a leader of a mass movement that sometimes aroused strong feelings and evoked violent hatreds. It lay at the root of his capacity to act sensibly in crisis, to keep himself from being thrown off stride by other people's hysteria. It also conveyed to others, who often were hysterical, the reminder that reasonable behavior could be recaptured in the midst of crashing and irrational chaos. It lay at the basis of his capacity—not an infallible one, but an impressive one, especially when tested in the communal blood baths of the forties—to make men act as much as possible like men rather than driven creatures.

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Night Flight

MARY OLIVER

Traveling at thirty thousand feet, we see
How much of earth still lies in wilderness,
Till terminals occur like miracles
To civilize the paralyzing dark.

Buckled for landing to a tilting chair,
I think: if sudden wind or accident
Should send us on across the upper air,
How many miles, or nights, or years to go
Before the mind, with its huge ego paling,
Before the heart, all expectation spent,
Should read some message in the scene below?

But already now the loved ones gather
Under the dome of welcome, as we glide
Over the final jutting mountainside
And past the suburbs, tangled in their lights;

And settled softly on the earth once more
Rise in the fierce assumption of our lives,—
Discarding swiftly as we disembark
All thoughts that held us wiser for a moment,
Up there alone, in the impartial dark.

✪ MARY OLIVER's first book, *No Voyage and Other Poems,* was published here last winter and in London in 1963.

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The Traveler: Home

Carol Johnson

You have heard it before:
"You must return"
from Madame Cleo—
"two good things: a Jew
and Greek"—
to the persevering Aegean
rapt and taught
how few drachmas are enchantment's worth.
The godly fathers there grow beards, wear blue.
Oozing by metro to the sea and out
the many, singing and talking, bring spontaneous
applause unto Epidauros whereat
Electra and Orestes join again.

Conjunction is the world's whole sorrow and
apartness, farce.

What levity and what convivial deceit
the gods make choice
I have pursued it on their grounds.
I have, remembering a mystery, walked slow
or scootered to a halt
where lambs hung flayed and sad-eyed

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at Heraklion
amid a disputation of insects,
a hubbub of cries:
History.

All lives, Atropos, take editing,
the inner most of all.

Those shadows which are cursive, written tall,
ride across waters not to scrutinize.
Poseidon, dry at Athens, hear me
now.

✪ CAROL JOHNSON's poems and criticism have appeared in *Sewanee Review, Southern Review, Aylesford Review* (England), *Quarterly Review of Literature* and elsewhere. *Figure for Scamander* is a recently published volume of her poems.

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Cleric or Critic?

The Intellectual in the University

JOHN WILLIAM WARD

Is the main function of the university teaching—that is, the transmission of knowledge and the values of the culture to future generations? Or, is the main function of the University research, the discovery of new knowledge? The tension generated between those two questions we recognize as basic to the definition of any institution of higher learning. It is a tension that has a long history which derives from different ways of looking at the University, different ways of looking at the meaning of education, different ways of looking at the nature of mind itself.

One view had it—and to venture a sweeping generalization, one may say it was the dominant view from the time of Plato to nearly the end of the eighteenth century—that the educated man was that man best conversant with the classics of Western civilization. His triumph was to be a cultivated gentleman, an embodiment in the present of the vitality of a tradition to which he adapted himself. He did not presume to create his own norms. He did not search for new principles of action. Rather, he sought to discover the rules for right action by a careful scrutiny of the past. He conformed to its prescriptions. He was, in other words, a traditionalist.

Somewhere toward the end of the eighteenth century, and markedly by the nineteenth, the conception of the nature of the intellectual underwent a dramatic shift. The intellectual or artist became someone who was original, who escaped the rules of the schools, who transcended the limits of convention, whether intellectual or social, and embodied novelty and variety in his work, perhaps even in his personality. The notion, set forth at the beginning

✪ JOHN WILLIAM WARD, professor of history at Amherst College, presented this essay as a lecture at the University of Massachusetts last summer.

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by Plato and which had ruled for so long, that works of thought or imagination were imitations of some reality outside the self gave way to the notion that the self, the individual genius, unencumbered by the past or convention or the demands of society, was the source of truth or beauty. The classical ideal of learning as the assimilation of and preservation of the past gave way to the modern notion of learning as the discovery of the new.

That is a sweeping sketch of a long and complicated tradition, one in which I have left out all the shading and preserved only the starkest outlines. But let me point to a way, a homely way, in which we in the University are still involved in the terms of this confusion about the meaning of knowledge and the meaning of education. We are, wittingly or unwittingly, products of past history. The only virtue in the study of the past is to make us more aware, more self-conscious, of the complexities and dimensions of our problems in the present. Only those willfully innocent of history are surprised to discover that their day-to-day problems are old problems, indeed, and that the terms were set down long ago.

Today, one of the demands of those who teach in the University is that they do scholarship which, as the pat phrase has it, is an original contribution to knowledge. Among my own acquaintance in the profession, there are hardly one or two who have made an original contribution to knowledge, if we take the word "original" in any serious sense. I would go further and say for 99 and 44/100 percent of the faculty I know, that if they had a truly original idea, it would present such a threat to all their established and comfortable notions they would be so embarrassed by its presence they would hardly know where to put it, where in the desk to hide it away.

What I say will surely come as no surprise to anyone in education, and yet—and yet—we persist in the notion that the University must seek a faculty that is on the frontiers of knowledge, striking out in new directions, leading us by the light of their original minds. The man who modestly sets himself the still enormously ambitious task of assimilating what others have said, the lessons of the past, of becoming, in other words, a responsible em-

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bodiment of the tradition of the past, the man who does not presume to be an "original," who is content to write books setting forth what he has learned and how he thinks it bears upon the present, such a man is hard put to find a name for the calling he modestly pursues that does not seem mildly depreciatory, mildly condescending. The word "dilettante" today is simply pejorative. We forget that it derives from the meaning, "to take delight in." Like the word "amateur": one who is in love with something. Can we look about ourselves and say candidly that our society would be the poorer if more of us took a delight in things of the mind and objects of the imagination? Today we need desperately what once was meant by the amateur and the dilettante, but we are so afraid of words like conventional and traditional that we refuse to admit the worth of such a personality.

Yet we feel still the pull, the emotional claim, of the opposite position, which insists that in a world of drastic, whirling change the past is no sure guide and that we must face, right front and courageously, the demands of new experience and new situations which demand new ideas and new modes of action. That double allegiance—on the one side to the notion of the University as the conservator of tradition, most especially in its teaching function, and on the other side to the notion of the University as the innovator and explorer of the new, most especially in its research function—that double allegiance takes us to the heart of the matter, to a tension implicit in the very nature of the University, a tension in the very nature of the life of the intellectual.

To define the tension that I think is inherent in the nature of the University, even in the life of the mind, I have to begin with that dread word, conformity. We are terribly fearful of conformity. We are sure it is all about us. We know all about the mass society, but we never see our face in that faceless mass of others who are conformists. It is always others who conform, not us, and it is a terrible thing to be one of the others. Yet, at least half the reason the University came into being in society was to make some like others, that is, to shape the present generation into an acceptance of the needs and the mores of society, to make it, in other words, conform to the expectations of society. As historians today

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like to put it, the University is a function of its society. That puts it the way intellectuals like to put it, abstractly. Specification is better.

The oldest, the earliest, of European Universities was devoted to medicine; its purpose was to train doctors. In England, at Cambridge, in the year 1316, a college was founded for the express and special purpose of providing clerks for the King's service. At our own Cambridge, in Massachusetts, Harvard was founded in 1636 to provide a learned ministry to preach the word of God when the day came that the original clerical band had died out. When Harvard was debauched by the seductions of infidelity and deserted the Congregational faith for Unitarianism, colleges like Amherst sprang up in the western part of the state to preserve young men in the ways of their fathers and to protect them from the Babylonian corruption of Boston and Harvard Yard. Finally, our whole magnificent system of public, state-supported Universities had its origins in the Morrill Act, the land-grant legislation by the Federal Government in 1862, for the express purpose in the words of that legislation "to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes."

From Europe, through England, to our own country, institutions of learning have come into being to serve the needs of their society. Here the relation is direct and pragmatic. Universities have trained doctors and clerks and clerics because society wanted and needed doctors and clerks and clerics. Today we need businessmen and engineers and physicists and the Universities will go on as they always have and train men in the skills necessary to meet the demands of their society. At this level, the adaptation of the University to the demands of the society, its conformity, if you will, to the imperatives of society, is direct and largely, I think, untroublesome.

But there is another and deeper way in which the University, and all education, acts as agent in the process we call perhaps by other names but which we may call conformity. That is, education from top to bottom, from the earliest years to the latest years, is an agent, and an increasingly important agent in our world, of initiating the oncoming generation into the mores and values of

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the culture—our way of life, as we like to say. Quite apart from the skills it may teach or the expertise it may train, education ceaselessly initiates the young into society by instructing the student in the system of thought and imagery that underlies the values and aims of the culture. It provides considerable emotional sanction for prescribed forms of social behavior; it brings the student into close and intimate relation with intangible loyalties—the ethos, the principles, the approved norms of society. Education, in this perspective, is simply one of the ways in which a society, a culture, transmits itself across generations. The faculty, in this view, belongs—to use a favorite word of Coleridge's—to the clerisy, that is, the clerks of tradition whose job it is to transmit the past to the future, to maintain the traditions and the values of the culture that supports them. The faculty and the University are, in this view, the personal and institutional representatives of society to maintain and give expression to the values of the culture. Because of that role, they enjoy a high degree of social esteem as well as material support as the official spokesmen of the culture.

But once you set a man to thinking, curious things are bound to happen. At this point an ironic consequence follows. In the very act that society assigns the intellectual, that is, in preserving and transmitting the values of the culture, in expressing and giving voice to the values that inform the culture, intellectuals are driven inevitably toward heresy. One needs to be careful here. By heresy I do not mean simply the out-of-hand rejection of, the mindless rebellion against, the values of the culture, but something much more complex. In the very act of formulating and articulating the values of the culture, the intellectual is driven to see tensions and even contradictions within the system of values that society knows and cherishes as tradition. The intellectual makes society uncomfortable because he makes it face choices between goods, different values, neither of which it wishes to surrender. But the intellectual, once you set him the task of giving voice to the meaning of tradition, will point out that one cannot always have it both ways. To use a simple example: as a society, we esteem both liberty and equality, but the historian will quickly remind us that only in special social and economic circumstances may we enjoy both, that at different moments one may have to give way to the

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other. In other words, in recovering the tradition, the intellectual makes us, at least those who will listen, realize that tradition, our way of life, is no simple unitary thing to be carried comfortably about like a tape in our pocket to measure our approximation to or our deviation from tradition in our actions in the present. Instead, tradition suddenly turns into an elastic measuring rod, relative to the conditions of the present. Its definition is not simply a matter of turning to sacred texts and reading what is writ there. It is, rather, a matter of serious commitment to the present as well as to the past. So, even as cleric, even as conservator of and embodiment of the tradition of the past, the intellectual is, in accepting that role, plunged deeply and inevitably into the battles of his own time.

Let me offer a simple example of what I mean when I say that the intellectual in recovering and giving voice to the values and the tradition of a culture does, in that very act, become a critic of tradition. The example has to do with a single event in the year 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition, the Chicago World's Fair, the famous White City built on the shores of Lake Michigan to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of when Columbus sailed the ocean blue and blundered onto America. The organizers for the Fair did have a formal opening in 1892 to preserve the round symmetry of the year but the Fair did not actually open until 1893. A great deal went on at that Fair which is of considerable interest to the student of American culture, but I want to use just two matters connected with it.

First, this was the place where in 1893 the great American historian, Frederick Jackson Turner, delivered his famous paper, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," a thesis so influential in the interpretation of American history that it is fair to say that it dominated the writing of American history for forty years, until it came under attack in the Great Depression.

Second, the Fair, marking four hundred years of American experience, was supposed to signal the coming of age of American society, to dramatize its place among the civilized nations of the world, so it stimulated Nathaniel S. Shaler to put together a large three-volume work, done by many hands, called *The United States of America.* Shaler was a professor of geology at Harvard Univer-

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sity and dean of the Lawrence Scientific School; he was, in other words, a member of the establishment, and he brought together some of the best minds of his time in what is one of the first and one of the best cooperative attempts to write the history of the United States.

To get at a problem in the definition of the meaning of the American tradition, let me deal with each one separately and then array them one against the other. Turner's thesis, put bluntly in his first formulation of it, was that "the existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development." It is obvious what Turner is trying to do. He wants to turn the attention of Americans away from Europe, away from the past, and turn it toward America, toward the constant, ongoing process of the making of America. He is also arguing a kind of ecological determinism: contact with the frontier gives rise, as he put it in his essay, to "the really American part of our experience." So, he writes, "American development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating the American character. The true point of view in the history of this nation is not the Atlantic Coast, it is the Great West."

Even one not familiar with Turner's writings will recognize that he speaks out of a considerable emphasis in American thought. The notion at work in Turner's reading of American history is that the American is a man who escapes from Europe to seize the opportunity for a fresh start, the chance to begin over again. The movement out of society to a world unencumbered by form and tradition and social restraint is reenacted again and again as the characteristic American takes his way West. If one will imagine, if one will call up before one's mind's eye, a map of the Western world, one gets a sharper sense of the dramatic tableau that Turner describes. Across the Atlantic Ocean stands Europe; westward lies the New World, America. In the sequence Turner relates, Europe stands for society, tradition, restraint, the lethargy of the past, the system of classes, inequality, undemocratic and irresponsible rule by kings and aristocrats. To sum it up, Europe

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stands for the enervation and corruption of a decadent civilization. To the West, though, stand freedom, spontaneity, simplicity, the self-reliance of the individual, equality, innocence—no less than, to use Turner's language, a perennial rebirth. To sum it up, the beneficent power of unfallen nature.

Turner is not simply saying this is the way things went. He is saying it is good this is the way things went. He is putting forth a way of looking at the meaning of American experience and saying this is the really American part of our experience. He asks us to share in his definition of the meaning of what it is to be an American.

But if the movement out of society, away from the East when it becomes more and more like Europe, the movement toward nature and the frontier is, as Turner insists it is, the really American part of our experience, then consider what this reading of the American tradition leaves out. The world of Western frontier farmers leaves out, one hardly need be reminded, Boston and New York and Philadelphia and Charleston. It leaves out, it even gladly rejects, the contribution Europe has made to the development of our national experience. It leaves out a number of Americans: Hawthorne and Melville, Henry James, Willard Gibbs and Henry Adams. It leaves out, in other words, a range of experience and attitudes that are indispensable to the realization of our stature as fully developed human beings. It leaves out the consideration of sophisticated ideas and all art. It leaves out no less than the sense of the past itself and its embodiment in tradition. Finally, and most obviously, it leaves out the city and the technology that was implicit in the urban, industrial Chicago where Turner stood when he spoke. All these are somehow not really American.

Leaving Turner for the moment as I have described the major thrust of his thought, let me turn to my second instance, Nathaniel Shaler's three volumes, *The United States of America.* There was another way to read the meaning of the American historical experience, one that runs counter to Turner's reading, and one that is symbolized in the physical format of Shaler's three volumes. In putting together the three volumes of which he was general editor, Shaler picked a lithograph as frontispiece for each volume. For Volume I, he chose Christopher Columbus, the dis-

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coverer of the New World; Volume II, Samuel F. B. Morse, identified as the inventor; Volume III, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the poet. The selection of the three figures is not accidental; the contents of the volumes are organized in the same fashion. Volume I deals with the geography of the New World and its abundant natural resources; Volume II deals with the exploitation of the land, the emergence of industry and technology, the development of America's transportation network and the maturation of its economy; Volume III deals with the political system and, finally, the achievements of Americans in literature and art.

If one considers it, one can see that Shaler, both in the illustration he chooses to put at the front of each of his three volumes and in the material he thinks appropriate to the successive volumes, has in mind a theory of history that is implicit in the format of *The United States of America.* It is, simply, a view of American history that sees it as the record of the advance of civilization through fixed stages. First, we have the discovery and the natural setting, then the economic development of the material base of society, leading to the achievement of a political order and the flowering of the arts and the imagination. The sequence is symbolized by the discoverer, the inventor and the poet. The meaning of America is the advance of civilization into higher and higher forms.

If one imagines again that map of the Western world, one will see that in Shaler's vision of American history the terms of the contrast between East and West are the reverse of Turner's. The western edge of advancing settlement no longer stands for the moment of rebirth and life-giving simplicity. Now, the western edge of advancing civilization represents the undeveloped beginnings, the rude and primitive start of a process, the culmination of which lies East, presumably all the way east in Europe where the process has achieved its full development in a rich culture of art and intelligence and sophisticated social forms.

Shaler's three volumes epitomize, in other words, a view of the meaning of America as the advance of civilization into a raw and savage continent. He is thinking within the frame of reference of a theory of progress, while Turner's interpretation of American history belongs to a species of primitivism.

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Yet if, as I have said about Turner, there is in the frontier interpretation of our history a threat, even a denial, of the life of the mind, a depreciation of critical and sophisticated forms of intelligence and imagination, there is a subtler threat lurking in Shaler's reading of the meaning of America. Like many Americans, of his time and ours, he presumes that physical and economic advance will somehow inevitably result in cultural achievement. To put it vulgarly, his theory of fixed and chronological stages of advance says that you have to get the plant built first, you have to take care of the business of the world which is business, and after all that is done, then you have time for literature and thought. Then the last stage will arise inevitably. He is optimistic, of course, grandly so. But he is also a fatalist, and a theory of inevitable, fixed progress makes it possible to concentrate now on business and profit and work because sometime, sometime in the future, of course, we will have time for philosophy and art and scholarship. Fully developed intelligence comes at the end. It does not interfere in the world's work now. Despite the fact that the poet is held up to be the final goal, he is put off to the end. He is a luxury to be afforded later after men of the world finish dealing with first things first.

Turner and Shaler, therefore, present different readings of the meaning of American history, antithetical interpretations of the meaning of what is American about America. One will quickly recognize, of course, that they are simply particular spokesmen for, representative examples of, attitudes that are much more deeply rooted in American culture than their individual instances. If this were not so, if they did not participate in a much more widely socially shared way of understanding American experience, one may presume they would not have looked at American history in the different ways they did. Because from the beginning of our history there have been two ways to read the meaning of the American experience.

As the first settlers set out from the Old World to the New, they were both leaving an old home and seeking a new one. Universally, in all human experience, the voyage or the trip has lent itself to easy translation into the metaphor of the quest, a symbolic quest for the meaning of it all. One thinks of the wander-

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ing tribes of Israel in the Old Testament, Homer's Ulysses, Bunyan's Pilgrim, Don Quixote. The metaphor is probably basic to shared human experience, but it has been especially characteristic of the American version. From Whitman tramping the open road to the adventures of Saul Bellow's Augie March, the best of our imaginative writing has been organized around metaphors of setting out and venturing forth into the new and the unknown. Until the twentieth century the metaphor seemed hardly metaphor at all. It conformed so closely to our historical experience that it seemed a fair description of American reality.

But the meaning of a journey out of the Old World into the New always had a certain doubleness to it, an inevitable ambivalence. One valuation had it, as in Turner, that the movement westward into a virgin land meant the rejection of Europe and the past. In this reading of our collective experience, the past stood for the snobbery of social classes, feudalism, rule by irresponsible aristocrats and kings, the craft of priests, institutional complexity and social decadence; the New World, the future, stood for the equality of all men, the abolition of invidious social distinction, freedom, spontaneity, simplicity and vigor.

Yet at the same time, as in Shaler, there was another way to read our experience. Here, America meant the advance of the best of civilization, choice seed sifted from the Old World for planting in the New, as the Puritans had it, the advance of civilization into a raw and savage continent. In this reading the American venture meant the progress of reason, order, enlightenment and cultivation, an extension of civilization into a wild, untamed and savage continent where law was absent and barbarism posed a constant danger to the achievement of human order.

Not only were the terms of the evaluation different; they pointed in different directions in space and in time. For the first, the geographic locus of value was West, the frontier, and beyond it the unfallen innocence of an Edenic world; for the second, the point of reference was East, toward a developed society of urbanity and sophistication. Such a stark formulation suggests an "either-or" appraisal, and one may ask impatiently, which was it? But the question is a false one historically, and it may even be a false one humanly. Americans saw the matter of their experience both

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ways; they assumed the best of both. That is, Americans have from the beginning of their national experience affirmed their culture at one and the same time as both a return to the harmony of a simple and equalitarian society and an advance in the power and achievements of a complex civilization. The ambivalence runs from the politics of Thomas Jefferson to the New Frontier of John Fitzgerald Kennedy; it helps to account for the persistent nostalgia for a presumably better past, somehow just lost, somehow just behind us, which permeates our industrial and technological society as well as provides the theme for some of our best imaginative literature.

All this brief excursion into the interpretation of American history has done is to suggest what starts to happen as soon as the intellectual turns to the past and begins to attempt to determine what tradition means. He discovers, as I have already said, that "tradition" is no unitary thing. He will discover and make us aware of tensions and contradictions implicit in the past of which Americans living in the past may not themselves have been fully aware. Even if he stops there, he confronts us with the need to take thought, the need to consider and to address the tension that persists into our own present and to attempt a resolution of it in some way in present action. Even as cleric of the past, even as one who holds up the past for our contemplation, the intellectual becomes troublesome.

But as I have indicated in my remarks about Turner and Shaler, the intellectual does considerably more than that. He inevitably goes on to imagine a better, a more appealing sequence of events which did not take place. He passes judgment and appeals to us to share that judgment on what at first he seems simply to describe. For example, however different the interpretations of the meaning of American experience in the frontier interpretation and in the theory of the progress of civilization, both curiously share one common attribute. They both present decerebrated views of the meaning of American history, views of history in which mind and intelligence and imagination have little or no place: Turner more markedly, of course, since intellect and feeling are not the qualities that characterize his simple society of untutored practical energy; but Shaler's view of history also implic-

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itly relegates feeling and imagination and intelligence to some future date when we can afford the luxury of such activity. Different as they are in other ways, both participate in the constant American emphasis on practical action in the present, both are in different ways anti-intellectual, both represent a threat to the importance of intelligence in day-to-day life.

So the intellectual, and by extension the University, becomes critic of society, not only by insisting that the study of the past raises problems for understanding in the present, but, more severely, by saying that the traditions of the past may themselves be a hindrance to the present, a source of our confusion, a block to our desire to create a humane and decent world.

The intellectual, in other words, in formulating the meaning of tradition, is led to imagine alternative lines of development that did not take place and that to him, whether aesthetically, or ethically, or politically, seem more admirable. He becomes, in other words, a critic of tradition, and, by necessity, a critic of his society. In the attempt to present, systematically and coherently, the general ground for values and beliefs, which only intermittently holds the attention and engages the passions of most men, not only in our culture but in all cultures—in this very attempt the intellectual becomes not only the conveyor of traditional values but critic of the very values he wishes to convey. So we, as intellectuals in the University, are caught finally in the unsettling posture of being inside and outside our society, passionately committed to it, yet by that very passion inevitably somewhat alienated from it. We are inside and outside our culture at one and the same time, balancing in the situation in which we find ourselves opposite and opposed demands. Little wonder that the society that supports us should be uneasy about what we are up to and little wonder we cannot easily say whether the main function of the University is the preservation of the old or the discovery of the new, whether the intellectual in the University is to be cleric or critic. What at first may seem to be opposites turn into one and the same activity. They represent not opposites, but poles which define the field of energy we name the intellectual life, the field of power we name the University.

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The Blind of San Pedro Yolox

JOHN GWALTNEY

As COPRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR in the National Institute of Mental Health project, "Role of Expectation of Blindness in a Oaxaca Village," I conducted field research in the *municipio* of San Pedro Yolox in southeastern Mexico.

The *municipio* is an attenuated political subdivision of the North Oaxacan District of Ixtlán. The nine hundred Chinanteco-speaking inhabitants of the *municipio* think of it as being comprised of natural, climatological provinces. Thus they speak of *tierra fría, tierra templada, tierra caliente y humeda* and *tierra caliente y seca.*

The center of municipal administration is the remote village of San Pedro Yolox situated in the upper extremity of the *tierra templada* or temperate region. The steep trails of the *municipio* preclude the use of even a jeep, and the high village and its dependent hamlets are accessible only by foot or sure-footed beast.

Above the village the *municipio* is mountainous and heavily forested. That portion of it lying below the village is either tropical and humid or tropical and arid. The Chinanteco exploit all these natural areas with a variety of agricultural systems.

Yoleños derive the bulk of their subsistence from the hot, wet, down country, where it is possible to cultivate two maize crops annually.

This tropical humid region is a highly infected onchocercosis area. Onchocercosis filariae are transmitted by the bite of a species of black fly, and if the resultant nodules are not removed, they

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survive and multiply in connective cranial tissue and, in many cases, cause blindness. Prolonged exposure to this disease, occasioned by the exigencies of subsistence, has caused a high rate of blindness among Yoleños.

Onchocercosis is probably of fairly recent introduction. Most current authorities are agreed that this disease was spread in southern Mexico and Central America and northwestern South America by African veterans of the Mexican Expedition of Napoleon III. But such is the synchronic nature of Yoleño culture that people do not conceive of a time when this disease and its ultimate consequence, blindness, were not traditional expectations.

It would be difficult indeed to exaggerate the influence that a high incidence of blindness exerts upon Yoleño culture. It is a tribute to the inventiveness, if not the veracity, of the press that it has managed to do just that. One would be hard put to it to discover any place more mercilessly misrepresented by the flights of anecdotal fancy.* Yolox is, according to popular rumor, the capital and home province of the *Country of the Blind.* Many informants in Oaxaca City and Ixtlán, some of whom were highland Chinantecos, were emphatic in their assertions that there is a sovereign in Yolox whose preeminence derives from his possession of the one functional eye in the region. Others maintained that there a weary, one-eyed chivalry, bound by compulsions all the more sinister for their indefiniteness, is principally employed in hauling their sightless fellows round the countryside. There, hordes of hapless adults live in servile submission to their sighted offspring. There, every living creature is blind. There, the majority of all species is blind. These latter-day Mandevilles have observed with their own eyes, or have by persons incapable of mendacity been reliably informed of: shepherd sheep, guide goats and seeing-eye hogs.

Yoleños themselves are in no slight degree responsible for the formidable accretion of hyperbole that obscures the real character of their community. Most of the Yoleño blind are reduced to mendicancy. An understandable amalgam of pride, civic and familial, and a healthy skepticism concerning the generosity of their *paisanos* restrict the amount of intravillage begging. Local, extravillage

* James, Michael, *National Enquirer,* New York, Vol. 39, No. 5, October 11, 1964, p. 3.

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mendicancy is the preferred form of seeking charity, but it is not uncommon to meet Yoleño blind beggars far afield. A number have gone as far as Veracruz and Mexico City, some hundreds of miles from their pueblo. They reward their patrons with entertainment, generally musical, and a blessing. But should these prove insufficient, most clients or their guides resort to a recital of their plight that omits no particular conducive to compassion and open-handedness. Sighted youths of both sexes who leave the village for agricultural or domestic labor are also prone to enlarge upon its glories and its disadvantages. Add to this the splendid appearance of certain of the wilder journalistic accounts and the not altogether inconsiderable fact that they are not calculated to retard circulation, and we see why literal truth is sometimes sacrificed to the interests of journalistic symmetry, poetic license and the profit motive.

The realities of life in the *municipio* of San Pedro Yolox, while not so spectacular as its fictional image, are, in their own way, even more remarkable. For there, in a community of approximately one hundred and twenty constantly migrating, impoverished agrarian families, some twenty blind persons must manage somehow to exist and relate to their neighbors in a very special social situation.

Most Yoleños are subsistence farmers cultivating parcels at varying elevations. Families cultivate and sow their upland parcels amid the alpine environment, then descend to tropical and subtropical areas to prepare and sow their downslope holdings. The Yoleño blind are attached to these families and move with them. Thus the necessity to be where food is and to tend and guard plots at varying elevations constrains most Yoleños, blind or sighted, to ascend and descend thousands of feet of very rugged slope several times a year.

The nature of the climate and terrain imposes a formidable obstacle to independent travel for a blind person. The steep, stepped paths of the village present very little contrast in terms of relief from the slopes they cling to. The heavy summer and autumnal rains convert the precipitous tracks of the village into a network of diminutive torrents, each with a number of miniature

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cataracts. The several streams that flow through and around the village and the rest of the *municipio* are high from June to October. Traversing these watercourses or traveling anywhere near them imposes special difficulties upon any person who is obliged to hear his way, for they roar like heavy, sustained surf for at least half the year, obscuring and distorting all other sounds in their vicinity.

The hazards and difficulties of travel for blind persons within the confines of the high village differ in magnitude only in those portions of the *municipio* that stretch above and below it. Beyond the ceremonial village the paths are more steep and rutted, and the streams, wandering livestock, and deep chasms pose even greater obstacles to travel.

Despite the manifold impediments to travel, the imperatives of Yoleño existence oblige its blind population to move about a great deal. The quest for food, begging expeditions, *fiesta* attendance, social visiting, and the search for a feeling of usefulness constrain most blind persons to travel. Many maintain that they travel great distances alone and unaided. They further maintain that the incidence of unaided travel was much higher before the construction of a profusion of new paths that not only present new choices, but distort the old familiar route. When there was but one way to ascend to the high pueblo from the low-lying hamlets, the possibility of losing one's way was far less likely. Unaided travel has always been the rare exception rather than the rule. There are two travel techniques in general use among Yoleño blind: the services of human guides and a number of stick styles. The use of animal guides is unknown in Yolox. Yoleños, blind and sighted, were greatly surprised to learn that some blind people relied upon dogs for guides. They expressed a general repugnance at relying upon a brute creature for so personal a necessity and speculated that foreign dogs must be infinitely more virtuous than their own. The blind person generally takes the arm of the sighted guide who walks a little ahead. Very often the narrowness of the paths forces the adoption of an intermediate stick style that combines cane technique and the services of a human guide. The sighted person leads the blind person by means of a stick held between them. Sighted

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Yoleños of all ages act as guides, but this is regarded especially as the province of children. On the steepest trails, blind persons will use two heavy sticks as much for support and balance as for feeling their way.

Local mendicancy is a means of augmenting the food supply. Money is scarce, and Highland Chinanteco largess generally takes the form of a *tortilla* or two, a cup of strong local coffee, or a bowl of beef soup at *fiesta* time. On the few occasions when money is given it is extremely unusual for the donation to exceed a half-peso piece. While blind women do regularly ask charity at the four stores of the high village, most mendicancy is extracommunal, although not so much so as is generally believed by Yoleños. Men go on more begging expeditions than women and tend much more to beg farther abroad and to avoid intracommunal mendicancy.

The begging expedition fulfills social and psychological needs at least as compelling as any economic imperatives. It is the vehicle of self-esteem on the part of the donor, and of that sense of purposeful activity so vital to the sense of personal worth among the blind.

Traditions of generous gregariousness and narrow familism exist side by side in Yoleño communal character. Many people say, "It is not God's will that I should be as generous as I should like to be." Despite the severe limits imposed upon generosity by family orientation and the rigor of existence, the Highland Chinanteco maintain the illusion of largess through the all but unfailing exercise of mutual tact. This tact upon superficial examination appears to be simple mendacity. In actual fact, the Chinanteco are keenly aware of one another's expectations and generally say what they think the stranger or their neighbors would like to hear. The guide will assure the footsore stranger that a destination that is, in fact, hours away can be reached within minutes because he knows that is what a tired man would like to hear. A blind beggar will assure his poor neighbor that a cup of black coffee or a portion of *tortilla* is everything he could wish for.

The image of the stolid, taciturn mountaineer has no place in Yolox. The Highland Chinanteco have developed the art of con-

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versation in every one of its manifestations, from gossip to grand oratory, to an unsurpassed efficiency. The circulation of gossip receives an indispensable assist from these begging expeditions. Within days of my arrival in the village, an elderly blind lady had spread an entirely apocryphal and rather unflattering explanation of my interest in the *municipio* throughout the high pueblo and many of its surrounding hamlets. Within hours of the circulation of this story it was overtaken and eclipsed by an equally apocryphal, but far more flattering, account of my activities carried by my first blind informant.

Sighted Yoleños regard their blind *paisanos* with a subtle amalgam of compassion, impatience, envy, tenderness, suspicion and awe. There is much of the magical and theological in the attitude of Yoleños toward blindness and the blind. Some few people regard this disadvantage as being pathologically caused, but in most minds the germ theory of disease is only a much misunderstood poor second among equal primary causes. Most Yoleños hold with varying degrees of tenacity to a traditional folk pathology which is a blend of medieval Mediterranean elements with a strong substratum of Amerindian beliefs.

Many people attribute the high incidence of blindness to the atmospheric changes. "If a man works in his fields down in the ranchos where the air is hot and wet, he sweats very much. Then, when he comes up to the pueblo where the air is fresh and cool, he foolishly takes off his shirt and the change in air gives his body a shock and he becomes blind."

Blindness is sometimes regarded as retributive. The Yoleño regards civic virtue and especially familial obligations as divinely enjoined behavior. Intransigence or disobedience, especially to the father, is quite literally a sin. At least three informants advised me in strictest confidence that the real cause of the misfortune of a certain Pedro was that he had struck his father. As this gross infraction had been committed in complete sobriety, "Tata Dios closed his eyes forever." A blind informant assured me that one reason for his punishment was a fight he had had with his *primo hermano* during a *fiesta*. Overt violence on the part of sober persons is practically unheard of. Fighting with members of one's own

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family is looked upon as the worst thing a person can do. It was evident that this man attributed his blindness not so much to any purely physical damage he sustained during the fight as to the impiety of the altercation.

However they are thought to be stricken, the blind are believed to be under the special protection of God. He delivers them from snakes and poisonous lizards and scorpions. He will probably reward them with a long life, if not a particularly happy one. He prevents them from falling in the precipitous streets and trails of the *municipio,* a dispensation that apparently is denied non-Chinanteco blind. He rewards those who assist them in any way and punishes those who are discourteous to them.

Although not a dominant element in their view of the blind, there is the undeniable presence of a pathetic impatience on the part of sighted Yoleños toward their blind *paisanos.* The blind are an uneffaceable, graphic reminder of the inability of most Yoleños to realize that element of their self-image that can only be approximated during a few *fiestas.* Males especially dream frequently about feasting their friends lavishly upon beef soup, oven-baked bread, hot chocolate and even turkey *mole.* Dreams in which the dreamer has been reduced by the rigors of hunger to provide some loathsome food such as rat or monkey for his family are frequent. Certain families are rumored to eat such highly undesirable foods. Most sighted informants indicate that the people think that the blind always expect one to give them something in a tone that leaves little doubt that they are lamenting the poverty that prevents them from being as generous as they would like to be. The blind are constant reminders of that bitter destitution—all the more so now that even San Pedro Yolox has an ever increasing acquaintance with the world beyond its formidable ridges.

Side by side with this feeling of impatience there exists a tender regard for the blind more marked in young children than in adults, but readily apparent in both. The diminutive is almost always used when referring to blind persons as individuals or as a group. People make a special point of inviting them to incur the less onerous and largely honorific obligations of *compadrazco.* When asked why they have carried back a stick from the mountains

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for the use of a blind person, or why they have shared their food with a non-family member who is blind, or why this or that blind person was chosen to be *compadre,* the most general and immediate reply is, *"no más por cariño."* (Just out of love.)

The expression of any negative feelings about blind people was never voiced initially and never stated in the presence of other Yoleños. Chinanteco tact, which is difficult to exaggerate, serves to maintain the general public appearance of amiability and peace. Public or overt shows of anger or pugnacity by persons who are not drunk are generally called cowardice. A wise man does not yield to public displays of anger or rage. He cannot be publicly provoked but he waits and watches and responds in stealth. It is in the daily interaction of blind and sighted persons that this tact is most genuine and unalloyed. It extends even to the mutual maintenance of fantasy.

A totally blind man maintained that he was able to distinguish light. To add verisimilitude to his fantasy, he explained that he could not see objects on the ground or the light of the stars, but insisted that he could see the light of the moon and of the sun. Our first interview was conducted in front of an open window. He insisted that he could see the sunlight pouring through it. There is brisk wind activity at the altitude of the pueblo, and he could feel the current of air through the window as I could, but neither of us could see the light of the sun.

This old man had cherished this fantasy of being able to see the light of the sun and moon for the better part of a generation, and no one of his *paisanos,* kin or non-kin, had challenged his illusion. He left my house assuring me that he would have no difficulty making his way home. He had not proceeded a dozen steps before a number of young boys detached themselves from their playfellows and fell in step on either side of him. He made no request for assistance and they made no offer; they simply accompanied him to his house, chatting with that deferential ease that characterizes this kind of transgenerational communication. When they had escorted the old man to ground familiar to him, they dashed down the steep street, rejoining their age-mates at marbles. His neighbors, irrespective of the degree of personal affection they bore the

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man, were reluctant to question the fantasy. They would say: "Well, he says he can see sometimes," or, "I don't know—if he says he can, then maybe he will"; or, "he wants to be a whole man so badly that he can't help thinking that he can see a little anyway."

The ability to perform adult labor is a prime factor in the self-esteem of Yoleños. It is the pillar of general parental authority and is specifically mentioned by most people of both sexes and all ages as the principal justification for paternal dominance. It is the standard against which the young men in the Single Men's Association measure themselves and their companions. It is this service that earns the young girls the hard-won commendation of their mothers. It enfranchises the young men and validates the claims of the old for rest. The rigor of their existence elevates the capacity to bend one's physical faculties to one's will far above any other accomplishment. The ability to walk and never tire, bear heavy loads upon the head, to become part of the well-placed stroke of your machete or cane knife without throwing yourself, to track free-ranging stock over miles of broken country, gives the Yoleño a kind of pride in himself as a fully functioning working adult that renders hard work something more than mere drudgery or travail. Work is the curse of this world, but it is also the *sine qua non* of both self and communal acceptance.

It is the inability of Chinanteco blind persons to take a significant part in adult work that is regarded as the greatest single attendant evil of blindness, even though most blind persons are beyond the age when they would have been freed from a strict round of work. In spite of the fact that they lost their sight because of prolonged seasonal exposure to the bites of onchocercosis-bearing black flies occasioned by the agricultural work cycle, there is still a profound sense of uselessness.

Blind persons tend to divide their lives into two segments at the point when they are no longer capable of performing adult labor independently. People speak of the time when they were sound and could work as the time when they were *hombres buenos* (good, complete, men). They consider themselves incomplete when they are blind.

The longed-for restoration of sight is far and away the dominant

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theme of the dreaming of all blind people. This recovery occurs most frequently in a dream about work. "I was thinking that there is no creature which creeps, runs or flies that is so sly as the cold. Who of these can bite a man and spare his blanket? And when I had done thinking that, God sent me a sleep that pulled the teeth of the cold and in that sleep there was this thing which happened. Fan that was my friend when he was in this world came and we ate a morning meal. And when we two had eaten all there was, Fan said, 'Please go and find the bulls so we may prepare the ground.' And I said, 'How can I go and how shall I follow them!' But a warm wind came and blew away the clouds from my eyes and I went with the steps of a strong young man to track the beasts. But after I had followed them a great way, that warm wind left me and the clouds covered my eyes again."

Most blind persons go to great lengths in their attempt to recapture the feeling of usefulness. Blind women do a little milling and even attempt washing. Blind men will frequently walk to distant fields to pull weeds in the cane patches where the difference between the several varieties of weeds and the useful plant is readily discernible by touch. Blind persons of both sexes often select especially fine ears of corn which are preserved for seed, and occasionally they sort coffee beans. These attempts at labor, however, although psychologically useful to the blind person, do not contribute significantly to the family economy.

When sighted Yoleños are asked how a blind person amuses himself, the inevitable reply is, "He is blind, how can he do anything!" Blind people react in much the same manner, expressing surprise that anyone would not know that they "can do nothing." This helplessness, however, is more apparent than real. They are almost as active as sighted persons of comparable age, but old age is generally looked upon as a time of ripe judgment and well-earned leisure. Persons past the age of sixty-two are freed from the requirement to perform communal labor or pay communal assessments. There is no longer any significant weaving, carving or ceramics tradition to occupy hands released from regular participation in the agricultural work cycle. Among the Highland Chinanteco, as with southern Negroes in the United States,

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eastern European gypsies, and many other peoples around the world, many blind persons have used excessive leisure to develop a superior degree of musical proficiency. A blind man was the first director of the Municipal Band. He also instructed most of the sighted complement of the original band in their instruments. At present there is at least one blind trumpeter in the band and several other blind musicians in the *municipio*. Music is an indispensable element in the *fiesta* round, and the community values any facility in it very highly.

Yoleños live intimately with danger. In the world as they know it, earthquakes, the ravages of torrential rain, hurricanes, searing drought, poisonous reptiles, onchocercosis-bearing black flies, hostile raiding parties from their traditional enemies, the Comaltepecos, and a host of other calamities, natural and human, are recurrent possibilities over which they have no control. A certain degree of stoic resignation is a prime prerequisite to sanity for any population determined to occupy their country for any length of time under those circumstances.

In the minds of most Yoleños, blindness, however caused, is in the natural order. Most Chinanteco do not question or inveigh against the nature of things. The villagers are almost exclusively concerned with *their* portion of the earth *now*. Most things markedly remote from this world as they presently perceive it are incomprehensible and unmanageable. Hence, a prudent man will approach nature, and nature's patron, with that watchful deference the Chinanteco invariably reserve for powerful strangers.

The Chinanteco do not talk much about blindness, but the expectation of blindness has played a formidable role in ordering their social relationships. Custom dictates that all blind must be treated with tact and deference. The existence of a large group, the members of which belong to many different families and must be treated with courtesy by all members of all families, facilitates interfamily relations.

A number of sighted Highland Chinanteco have established colonies in the fertile lowlands in the region of Las Bocas. These colonies are far more lawless than the home pueblo, with a high incidence of feuding.

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Chinanteco children are accustomed to seeing blind persons from earliest youth. During my entire stay in the *municipio* no child ever displayed any of the reactions of fear, hostility and ridicule that blind persons often encounter in North American children. Children were among my first informants. They described things in terms meaningful to a blind person because they had always known that some people perceive the world without sight.

There is an easy yet deferential rapport between children and the elderly blind. Children expressed surprise when asked why they acted as guides, assuming children everywhere performed this service. Most replied that they acted as guides because it pleased them to do so.

Children are aware that there is a possibility that they might themselves become blind, but they are not any more concerned about this possibility than they are about the numerous other grim expectations of their comparatively precarious existence.

The seeming cavalierness with which Chinanteco of all ages appear to dismiss the possibility of blindness is a source of amazement to the stranger. The majority of persons preparing to descend to the onchocercosis-infected zones still take no precaution against the bite of the filariae-bearing black flies. Blindness is still most generally regarded as a cosmic intrusion of supernatural will which man is powerless to alter. This belief is being slowly changed by a recently undertaken medical campaign against onchocercosis. But for the present, blindness continues to be the agent of a rare transgenerational empathy. It minimizes interfamily hostility in an extremely familistic culture, and serves to forge a greater degree of communal solidarity by binding the very old and the very young together with ties of service, affection and never-failing tact.

Despite their special problems, the Yoleño blind are not marginal. They are in, as well as of, their pueblo. They are its most inveterate *fiesta*goers, its most vehement detractors and defenders, and the walking repositories of its lore and tradition.

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How to Be A Productive Scholar Without Any Time to Work

HARDIN CRAIG

IT IS LATE in the night before Philippi, and Brutus says,

> Let me see; let me see; is not the leaf turned down
> where I left reading? Here it is I think.

These are the conditions, and every scholar's world is full of Philippis. Let us also deny flatly the foolish Cloten's

> On whom there is no more dependency
> But brats and beggary.

WE are now ready to outline the requirements:

1. Persistence in the use of spare time; indeed, of filling the interstices of occupation and recreation with the products of a determined controlling interest. The agency is voluntary or directed attention. Reading and writing, in spite of what Dogberry says, do not "come by nature"; they are not appetites.

2. No strain or haste and no intensity beyond that of a clear head. Don't be a bad neighbor, a pedant or a prig. Such manifestations, although often seen, are not necessary. There is plenty of time, and the measure of value is excellence.

3. The operation requires:

   a) Gathering of material by reading and study. This does require time, the only thing that does. It can, however, in the ordinary academic life be provided for by the establishment of a sensible and flexible routine. In these days it rarely, if ever, requires foreign study or extensive travel. I base this on the fact that university libraries and many public libraries are well stocked and have, besides, interlibrary relations that provide for practically

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all the needs of scholars. Microfilms, moderate in cost, have put the written sources of the world into the hands of scholars.

b) *Thought. There is nothing quite so futile as sitting down to* think. Original and true ideas come of themselves, and no man can command their arrival. They come when the completest possible comprehension has been reached. That is all that can be said.

c) The gradual construction and perfection of a plan. When you have the outline of a plan, file new parts in their proper places—merely a matter of grouping together what Bacon called compatibles.

d) The key to progress is a persistent record of what you want to say—what you know, what you find, what you think.

e) Write well and in good form from the start, if it is only a few sentences or a paragraph. It is surprising how quickly such work builds up on the basis of a few minutes or an hour or two at a time.

f) The final operation, a rather pleasant one, is the revising, rearranging and shaping of the work as a whole. For your own satisfaction and for the adequacy of the work you cannot take too much pains with this.

NOTES:

1. It is well to have some work to occupy spare time at home as well as at the office or the library.
2. If you will thus integrate your intellectual life with your professional and domestic life, you can snap your fingers at the foundations.

I was never one of Hardin Craig's students but I am fortunate enough to be one of his friends, and some years ago he sent me a copy of "How to Be A Productive Scholar Without Any Time to Work." There must be quite a number of those single sheets, mimeographed on

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blue paper, in existence. Hardin Craig did not keep a copy, but all his students certainly did.

The advice applies to any writer, scholar or not, who has undertaken some beloved piece of writing which no one has asked him to do and for which, it may well be, he will never be paid. Since he must earn a living, the work will be done only in stolen time; intensity must be combined with a long patience. It was probably in some such fashion that a very busy public official wrote The Canterbury Tales *and therefore was never obliged to turn to a patron.*

It is a fine thing to have public support, but it is quite possible to survive without it. Hardin Craig's advice is a manual for survival, and it delights me especially because of its cheerfulness. It is no misfortune to be obliged to travel this particular terrain. The air may be thin, but it is good mountain air and can be quite exhilarating.

—Marchette Chute

In June, HARDIN CRAIG, the Shakespearean scholar, celebrated his ninetieth birthday and completed his sixty-second year of teaching. He spent last year as a visiting professor of English at his alma mater Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. Dr. Craig's books include *The Enchanted Glass, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages* and *An Interpretation of Shakespeare.* MARCHETTE CHUTE, herself a Shakespearean scholar, is the author of fifteen books. Her biographies are especially known for their thoroughly researched documentation.

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the way it is

Against a Background of Summer

WALTER TELLER

Although life is a harrowing thing at times, rich in frustration and disappointment, producing more dissatisfaction than joy, the red still resides in the rose. Summers come, boats sail to islands. When you wake to new ways of perceiving, you see the world with new eyes.

Arrived with my wife at our destination, we gazed on a scene that however familiar cannot be taken for granted. From a hillside we looked at an inner and outer pond, arms of the sea joined by miniature straits, all of it held in a landscape of moors and encircling morainal hills. A tangle of vines and tough plant materials cover the undulating moors. A tumble of glacial erratics lie on the windswept hills. Looking to westward we saw in the distance the sound flowing seaward, strung with islands. To eastward we saw the expanding ocean. A rhythmic view, or maybe superwide angle; a giant cinemascope of view with a cast of a hundred geese sometimes, and sometimes a marsh hawk or two. As my wife and I turned to enter the house we saw we were not alone. Another couple was already there, ensconced on a 2″ × 6″ laid horizontal, broadside up and over a sliding door.

Time was when pewees built their nests on the timbers of bridges. Now that the wooden bridges have gone they have moved to the framing of modular houses. Only where do they still find the horsehair? I examined our nest as much as the four little uglies within would allow. It seemed laced with hair. Yet how could that be? The island's draft horses have vanished to leeward. Have enough saddle horses arrived to meet the demand?

July 2—The sparrow-sized and fly-catching pewee is a good bird, we find out, to live with. Not a dithering, restless sort, he is either sallying, searching for prey, or sitting at ease and occasionally wagging his tail. Furthermore, he is quiet. Few phenomena of the natural world are more overrated than birdsong. The pewee, not a songster, speaks in a modest twit. A rather small bird with a rather large head, he carries himself with dignity. His bill is black, his eyes shining black. A startling thing about the pewee is the outsized bony feet.

As for distinguishing him from her, on first meeting the problem seems difficult. Neatly attired in matching outfits—black, white and grayish brown, a shading of powder blue at the throat, a wash of blue over the rump—and both birds working at feeding the young, the pewee belongs to a class of being for whom the secondary characteristics of sex are simply not very important.

After days of moderately diligent effort, my wife and I see that the male is larger and also more sharply defined. His head is bigger. His tail is longer and wider. Blacker

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WALTER TELLER is the author of *Area Code 215: A Private Line in Bucks County.* His earlier books include *Five Sea Captains, The Voyages of Joshua Slocum* and *The Search for Captain Slocum,* recently published in Paris under the title *Slocum, homme de mer.* This is the fifth installment of THE WAY IT IS, which will appear regularly in the Winter and Summer issues of the SCHOLAR.

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feathers extend down the back of his neck and whiter ones cover his throat.

How he and she hustle, fetching and carrying all manner of passing insects. Throughout the long summer day they are at it. Dusk comes at last. Then, dropping onto the nest, she covers the brood while he, close by, sits perched on a pine till the last light of day rolls under. Where does he go now, what does he do? I ask my wife. She replies, heuristically perhaps, that I ought to take the old boy down-island. "Why don't you buy him a beer?" she asks. "Maybe he'll catch a few barflies." And she adds, I am empathizing.

Not exactly, I try to convince her. The pewee does not know what I know. I have no way of knowing the avian things that he knows. The pathetic is only a logical, not a psychological, fallacy. While from dusk to dawn the she-bird is back in the nest, and he with his big-boned feet is clutching the lonesome pine, is he not truly discomfited? At such times he cannot help but feel lonely; he is one of the dispossessed. It may or may not be scientific, but you do, you must, identify with the brute and the dumb creation.

As I was leaving the post office, Harston Mills, wearing his usual long-visored fisherman's cap and great oblongs of yellow sunglasses, drove up with the mail. He grinned as he stepped from his white station wagon, stretched forth a short brawny arm and grasped mine. "This would be a beautiful day," he said, "if I was a summer person."

The pubescent young have now reached the stage where I doubt one parent could keep them afloat. They sit high in the nest, screaming, mouths open—four archetypal consumers.

The nest is looking terribly crowded. The youthful pewees must be feeling hot under the wings. One guesses as much by the way they are stretching and fanning. It is going to feel unbelievably good to take off into the cooling air.

July 6—At 8:30 this morning four immature pewees stood shoulder to shoulder beside a nest none would return to. We saw the first, in the time-honored manner of birds, elbowed out. Presently all four stood abreast flapping and cooling their wings. For a while my wife and I watched them backing and filling, but watching birds butters no parsnips. We turned away. A few minutes later, however, I went back to see what they might be up to. Too late. The fledglings had flown.

I called my wife. She came and confirmed the fact. Together we gaped at the tenantless nest and the 2″ × 6″ from which the tenants departed. Then, wanting a fonder farewell, my wife hurried out to find them. I followed. Looking, listening, scanning the fencerows—my wife asked, didn't she hear them? We looked and we looked and we looked.

That was it. It was fine, a credit and satisfaction as though we somehow had played our part—except that, like any relationship not wholly understood at the time, you miss it when it has gone.

"I'm not heavy enough to do the philosophical thing," said a summer friend as we sat glass in hand in the late afternoon and looked out on a sail-spangled scene. "I once kept a journal in which I wrote down the most affecting thing that happened each day. Some days it took me quite a while to decide what to write . . .

"The punitive superego," he added.

I said, "What other kind is there."

He said, "I don't look like a worrier but I am one. I wish it were the other way around."

July 15—Saint-John's-wort common as common is nevertheless not one of the few common wildflowers everyone knows. How few are common enough for that.

The plover is a limicoline bird which is to say, longshore inhabitant. Pronounce plover to rhyme with cover, not clover.

You go down to South Beach and you see it more crowded than ever you saw it before, and yet you discover fewer people you know. This is a thing my generation is learning. So the question naturally arises are the new summer people as nice summer

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people as we were when we were new. Probably they are but they're different too. They have made their way by different devices. Their equipment is different. We used to go down with a rag of a towel, they go with transistor radio. They have made their way by different devices; and their different devices, inevitably, have made their way to the beach.

If measurable change has been going on all along, why is change now so apparent? Because this year you see the table is set. First someone puts a knife on the table —you hardly notice. Then someone else adds a fork—and another a spoon. Comes a napkin, saltshaker, pepper grinder, plate, an airlines-type plastic glass. Suddenly the table is set—and you suddenly see the difference.

He grouses about the cupidity of the islanders whom he calls natives but to whom the word native means aborigine. He bashes around, seeking recreation and apparently thinking that travel is something it's not. No, the tourist dropping his pop bottle by the roadside is not more sinned against than sinning.

The upland plover is a poorish lover
The Saint-John's-wort, an inelegant sort.

Summer reading: it turns out to be rereading. The founding fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were all rich men, say the writers, all well endowed with cattle, sheep, servants, household goods, also hard money, that is, gold and silver. Quantities of oriental splendor—in Exodus a happy description-monger at work—specifying details of the sanctuary and yet it does not visualize; the ark, precious stones, copper, brass, shittimwood, carved wood—evidently impressive, what the people wanted—something for the rug merchants, and throughout all vicissitudes, on whatever terrain, unrelenting search for a science of the good and the nature of the right.

Hanky-panky with the tabernacle tent, but it was a way of holding together the tribesmen. Ark of the testimony, holy garments, bloody sacrifices. Are not all religions bloody? Tough rules, but it must have been a tough crowd. Where the prohibitions are, there will the need be found also. A society in an early stage, hence many regulations, not many options. No honor system. Order created out of chaos, free men out of slaves. Adaptation on the one hand, continuity on the other.

So far no jokes, no evidence of the Jewish sense of humor. Very serious business the struggle for existence, a people seeking not only a land but also a law, and a way of life. Humor came centuries later, when the ironies had become more apparent, fulfillment of the contract long postponed and Jews, paradoxically, more secure. Is not the fact that so much remains unfinished a great, good and optimistical thing? Better to be traveling hopefully than asking when do we get there.

July 27—While rereading Thoreau's *Cape Cod*, in the chapter called "The Wellfleet Oysterman," I ran onto this:

" 'Now I am going to ask you a question,' said the old man, 'and I don't know as you can tell me; but you are a learned man, and I never had any learning, only what I got by natur . . . I've thought, if I ever meet a learned man I should like to ask him this question. Can you tell me how *Axy* is spelt . . . *Axy*,' says he; 'there's a girl over here is named *Axy*. Now what is it? . . . Is it Scripture? I've read my Bible twenty-five years over and over, and I never came across it . . . Wife, how is it spelt?'

"She said, 'It is in the Bible; I've seen it.'

" 'Well, how do you spell it?'

" 'I don't know. Ach, ach, seh, seh—Achseh.'

" 'Does that spell *Axy*? Well, do *you* know what it means?' asked he turning to me.

" 'No,' I replied. 'I never heard the sound before.'

" 'There was a schoolmaster down here once, and they asked him what it meant, and he said it had no more meaning than a bean-pole.' "

Thoreau then says, "I told him I held the same opinion with the school master.

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I had been a school master myself, and had had strange names to deal with. I also heard such names as Zoheth, Beriah, Amaziah, Bethuel and Shearjashub hereabouts."

Strange names, strange beans to climb on Barnstable poles. Transplanted from the other side of the world, in Cape Cod they signified spiritual kinship between the Yankee and the Israelite. Although place and time were somewhat different, the problem was somewhat the same: to shape a nation in the wilderness. Identification with the people of their most-of-all familiar book must have enlarged Cape Codders' belief in unseen guidance and in themselves. While seeking understanding of their situation, the Cape Cod people with the Jewish names were also creating their myth.

As anyone who happens to read Thoreau side by side with Joshua discovers, Axy's parents, in naming her, honored a splendid woman.

"He that smiteth Kiriath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife," announced Caleb when he and his fellow tribesmen of Judah were struggling to seize the land they called the inheritance. Here was a woman so desirable that a man would give his life for her. We do not know what the casualties were, only that cousin Othniel won her. When Caleb handed Othniel Achsah, he also gave him a homestead tract. Achsah, hearing their land lay south, that is, in the Negeb, went to her father. In biblical style she "lighted off her ass" and, approaching the old man, asked for a blessing. Nimble-witted as well as nimble, she was in effect saying what is land without water. Caleb understood. With the "Upper Springs and the Nether Springs," with those great gifts he blessed her. Beautiful in her ethnic way, she must have been dear to her father. Caleb, a little figuring shows, was eighty-five at the time.

August 9—The season has reached the point where a lot of it now can be only looked back on.

A right-of-way to the pond to be sure, but it also leads through a dell and garden, a garden of flowering weeds. Beautiful weeds, or call them wildflowers, were they not so eager and everywhere they would surely be more appreciated. June days and all through the month of July they marched in feral procession. Today, exercising the right-of-way, my wife and I saw lingering Saint-John's-wort and the last of the rambling roses; Queen Anne's lace, yarrow, snapdragon, mullein, cinquefoil, veronica, clover. It was afternoon, so the evening primrose was open. We saw milkweed, its flowers fading, and bright flaming butter-and-eggs. If a man could look into the sunny-side-up jolly face of butter-and-eggs every day, he might learn how to live forever.

The shore is awash with sea lavender, tiny blue pale purple flowers. You go down to the pond at this stage of summer and at high tide are laving in lavender.

A dozen clams and a lobster roll
Are hard to beat. They feed the soul.

Balmy air, bright twilight, eight p. m. A great yellow disk creeps up the sky. Nebular fragments are flying. "Look at those clouds racing across the moon."

From a mite of herb garden my wife replies, "I'm picking basil." And a moment later, "I saw the clouds and I picked basil too."

"A question."

"Yes?"

"How do you like the combination?"

Hot day, the air wavy with heat. The first of the high bush blueberries, warm to the touch, are ripe. It was this kind of day years ago, so a native son told me, that he asked an aging relation, Captain Lot Claghorn, how he, the captain, was feeling. "No goddam good," Captain Claghorn replied. "My eyes are bad, can't hear, and can't keep a goddam thing on my stomach." "How's Aunt Sarah?" the native son who was then just a boy had inquired. "Mad. She went upstairs mad, but she's no call to be mad." Aunt Sarah, it seems, had been out picking berries and brought home a pailful. Uncle Lot, when he saw them, had said, "Anyone out picking berries on a day like this ought to be shot with a ball of their own dung." Which, in the shade of what I am reading, sounded rather Old Testa-

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ment and, for all its coarse texture, Thoreauvian.

August 15—Every island road leads to wonders and wonderful sights. Driving up-island in the early morning through the pine woods from Holmes Hole to Middletown is like driving through the Barbizon Forest—a marvelous place to study light. It's like driving through the Barbizon Forest and seeing there the first trailers, the first little pink asbestos houses, the first supermarket. When what is strange looks strange, that's the normal, the usual experience. But when the familiar begins to look strange, then you are seeing—and maybe for the first time.

Everyone knows the herring gull, the common sea gull. Hundreds breed in the dunes on the bight but the dump is the place to see the bird at close range. With glazed yellow eye he watches you empty your garbage pail into the pit. Gray-mantled, pink-legged he stands only ten yards away and with opaque eye watches. Is he seeing me for the first time?

"The irony of life," a summer friend said as we sat glass in hand in the late afternoon and looked out on a saltwater scene, "is that the thing you spend a lifetime acquiring, in a word, your wisdom, is the very thing you cannot hand on. Of all you have learned perhaps you can hand on a teaspoonful."

"A teaspoonful might be enough," I said. "The irony is that because of every man's limitations, and the limitations of every man's time-of-world, the thing he spends a lifetime acquiring must be, for the most part, wrong."

August 20—The guideposts of summer point downhill. Now, when most flowering shrubs have passed, white alder, fragrant sweet pepper bush blooms. Common non-poisonous staghorn sumac changes from green to red. The underprivileged side of the wild grape leaf looks desert-tan and leathery.

Certain sounds of the landscape are heard no more. The towhee, chewink, that pedestrian finch, no longer wakes you at daybreak chanting, *drink your te-ah, drink your te-ah,* repeating those dissonant noises over and over. A monotonous song, if it was a song, yet it was in its way delightful. And the bobwhite, another cheerful nonsinger, is still.

How long are you staying, people ask. My reply is, I do not know. What I know is that summer can suddenly end. One can feel a strong impulse to go.

As we made our last call, Harston Mills hauled up, wearing his long-visored fisherman's cap and sunglasses looking like fish-eyes. He grinned as he stepped from his mail-carrying wagon, stretched forth a short brawny arm and grasped mine. "Don't look at us as if we were poor," he said. "We can afford to live here all year round."

Where a man can afford to live—big subject, deceptively big, I thought as my wife and I hurried down-island. . . to make the boat. . . bound in.

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REAPPRAISALS

The American Novel Begins

PAUL LEVINE

In the process of discovering the American novel, literary critics have recently rediscovered the first American novelist, Charles Brockden Brown. Admired by Keats, Shelley and Hazlitt, and studied by Poe, Cooper and Hawthorne, Brown wrote six "romances" between 1798 and 1801, thereby becoming our first novelist and, more significantly, perhaps the father of the real American novel. As Leslie Fiedler has remarked about Brown, "To define his rank and status involves an attempt at redefining the whole tradition of the American novel. Where he is placed depends upon, and in turn determines, the total shape of the literary hierarchy in which he is situated."

To be sure, the great American novels had already been rescued from the juvenile shelves by D. H. Lawrence over forty years ago; but the full impact of Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature* was not felt until recently. "There is a new voice in the old American classics," Lawrence maintained, if readers only had the courage to look for it. "The artist usually sets out—or used to—to point a moral and adorn a tale. The tale, however, points the other way, as a rule. Two blankly opposing morals, the artist's and the tale's. Never trust the artist. Trust the tale. The proper function of the critic is to save the tale from the artist who created it."

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The moral complexity of the American novel lay in its "duplicity." Critics who followed Lawrence harped on this point continually, although sometimes it seemed that the only way for them to save the tale from the artist was to alter it beyond recognition. To transform Lawrence's image of "a new voice" into literary terms, it became necessary to invent a new term or to resuscitate an old one to distinguish the apparently different form that the American novel took from the European. In the Preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* Hawthorne had spoken of the "Romance" as distinct from the "Novel": "The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience. The former—while, as a work of art, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart—has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation."

Like Cooper before him and James after, Hawthorne remarked on the difficulty of cultivating the novel in the thin soil of American culture. Since the novel was essentially objective, it required a subject of some density in order to make any impression at all; the romance, on the other hand, was expressionistic, deriving its power from the imagination and not from the reality perceived. The great English novels of Richardson and Fielding, Austen and Dickens, were all, in their in-

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dividual ways, renderings of social reality or novels of manners. On the other hand, as Daniel G. Hoffman pointed out, "The social and literary situation in the American nineteenth century made the successful novel of manners a rarity and invited instead the development of fiction in another genre."

Lionel Trilling was perhaps the first modern critic to follow the lead of Hawthorne, Cooper and James, in his essay on "Manners, Morals, and the Novel." But it was Richard Chase who popularized the notion of the romance in his full-length study, *The American Novel and Its Tradition*. Chase's thesis that "the American novel tends to rest in contradictions and among extreme ranges of experience" and that "the profound poetry of disorder we find in the American novel is missing, with rare exceptions, from the English" has found support in such disparate works as Daniel G. Hoffman's *Form and Fable in American Fiction* and Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel.* While Chase maintained that it was the irreconcilable contradictions that created the tension in the American romance, Hoffman sought, in a rather literal-minded way, the sources of romance in native myth and fable, and Fiedler turned to a kind of mythic psychosexual spelunking that tended at times to trust neither the artist nor the tale.

What is clear from this critical trend is a broad attempt to define a distinctly American fiction in terms of genre. What Lawrence saw as a dynamic and ambiguous manifestation Chase and others have tended to fix as a manifest convention. Yet in making the romance *the* American genre Chase put Melville, Norris and James into the same leaky boat, Fiedler devoted eight pages to discussing *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and three sentences to *The Golden Bowl,* and both Chase and Fiedler were content to mangle the body of James's great fiction until it seemed as relevant as the work of George Washington Cable or Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Even more basic, however, is the bewildering problem of what separates American from European literature. Why, for instance, are *The Scarlet Letter, The Octopus* and *The Portrait of a Lady* romances and *Great Expectations, The Return of the Native* and *The Charterhouse of Parma* novels? What are we to make of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* a picaresque novel in the great English tradition of *Tom Jones,* or of *Moby Dick,* which delineates a specific society with a painstaking care rarely equaled in the English novel, or of *The Blithedale Romance,* which seems in such crucial ways so like the European novel of manners? To be sure, there *is* something distinctive about the classic American novels, but one wonders if it is a matter of genre.

If there is a significant difference between the American and European novel, I suspect it is a matter of rhythm. When Lawrence observed that people came to America "largely to get *away*—that most simple of motives" he hinted at the dominant theme in American literature: pursuit and flight. This theme is, of course, central in the Western tradition—from the Book of Genesis, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* through *Don Quixote* and *The Pilgrim's Progress* to the entire novelistic tradition of the picaresque and the *Bildungsroman* —yet in no other national literature does the very act of motion assume such primary importance. When one thinks of *The Leatherstocking Tales, The Scarlet Letter, The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym, Moby Dick, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Red Badge of Courage, The Ambassadors, An American Tragedy, The Great Gatsby, A Farewell to Arms, Light in August, The Grapes of Wrath, The Adventures of Augie March, Invisible Man* and *On the Road,* one begins to understand that movement is not merely an action leading toward an end but an end in itself. What this means in terms of American society has been the subject of volumes of social, political and economic history since Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis. What is important for this consideration, however, is the realization that in a remarkable way the form of the American novel mirrors its content: that, as in the archetypal West-

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ern movie, the action of the classic American novel has somehow become its subject.

It is the nervous rhythm of the American novel that carries us into a different fictive world. When Pip leaves for London or Sorel for Paris we are less interested in how they get there than in what happens to them once they have arrived. But Huck on the raft and Ahab on the *Pequod* describe the central images of *their* experience. Like Pym and Gatsby, Frederick Henry and Henderson the Rain King, they are never in repose. Men in motion, they seem to hold our interest only so long as they keep moving.

If there is a distinctive rhythm in the American novel, we should be able to locate it in our first distinctly "American" novelist. As Leslie Fiedler indicated, any configuration of the American novelistic tradition may depend upon Charles Brockden Brown's position in it. Born in 1771, Brown, like so many novelists after him, had burnt himself out at the age of thirty after writing six novels in four years. Thereafter he turned to journalism and became, ironically enough, our first professional critic as well as our first professional novelist. Although Brown's first attraction lies in his personification of our struggling romantic artist, it is his novels alone that have earned him a place in the American literary tradition. But because Brown's novels are alternatively gothic, sentimental, naturalistic, psychological and social, his place in the literary landscape has depended primarily upon the prejudices of the literary critic. Vernon Parrington, for instance, valued Brown mainly for the manner in which he "proposed to make fiction serve social ends." But although Parrington applauded the "political romanticism" Brown derived from William Godwin, he criticized the "literary romanticism" Brown derived from Ann Radcliffe.

It is the advocates of romance, however, who have recently revived Brown's reputation while reversing Parrington's judgment. Whereas Parrington and others had praised Brown's naturalistic descriptions of the Philadelphia plague in *Ormond* and *Arthur Mervyn*, Richard Chase and his followers have found in *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly* the gothic elements that begin the American romance tradition. "Brown's true *forte*," Chase wrote, "was melodrama of the sort that allowed him to advance beyond the Gothic novel and to inaugurate that peculiar vision of things we often find in American fiction—a vision of things that might be described as a heightened and mysteriously portentous representation of abstract symbols and ideas on the one hand and, on the other, of the involutions of the private psyche." Going a step farther, Fiedler saw Brown's novels initiating a dual tradition: his gothic tales beginning the mainstream of the American romance, and his sentimental novels leading to the dead end of middle-brow fiction. Thus in *Clara Howard* and *Jane Talbot* Fiedler found "a valiant attempt to redeem Richardson from his imitators" while in the four earlier gothic tales, "for better or worse, Brown established in the American novel a tradition of dealing with the exaggerated and the grotesque, which impose themselves on us, not as they are verifiable in any external landscape or sociological observation of manners and men, but as they correspond in quality to our deepest fears and guilts as projected in our dreams or lived through in 'extreme situations.' "

The schism between what Parrington called the realistic and the romantic, and what Fiedler defined as the sentimental and the gothic, is present in Brown's work, just as it is in the American novelistic tradition. Yet to find in Brown's novels the twin source of the American tradition, as Fiedler does, is probably to give his frail structures more weight than they can stand. We must remember that Brown was an amateur novelist who wrote feverishly and never revised. A contemporary of Brown's, John Neal, observed admiringly that Brown's work made an impact despite the fact that it "had no poetry; no pathos; no wit; no humour; no pleasantry; no playfulness; no passion; little or no eloquence; no imagination—and . . . a most penurious and bony invention—meagre as

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death." What he *did* possess was a keen intellect, enthusiasm, and a desire to create moral novels out of native material. But the "duplicity" that Lawrence discovered in the classic American novels is in Brown's work not the product of complexity but of confusion. I suggest that Brown does not so much begin the American novelistic tradition as predict it; at its best, his work resembles some of the most interesting but incomplete work of the great American masters. Like *The Marble Faun, Mardi* and *Pudd'nhead Wilson,* Brown's best tales have all the fascination of an intellectual puzzle with little of the fascination of a work of art. As such they are more interesting to discuss than to read, and easier to analyze than to enjoy.

Even a decade after the Revolution, America remained a culturally underdeveloped nation that still looked to Europe for intellectual assistance. Brown's ideas about art and society were first influenced by the English reformer, William Godwin, whose humanitarian treatise, *Political Justice,* imbued him with Utopian notions about the power of human reason, and whose social novel, *The Adventures of Caleb Williams; or, Things as They Are,* showed him that the sensational tale could appeal to the heart and the head simultaneously. As early as 1795 Brown was planning "a work equal in extent to *Caleb Williams,*" although he would not fulfill this ambition until the completion of *Arthur Mervyn.* Many of Brown's most characteristic touches are derived from Godwin—the all-consuming "curiosity" of his protagonists, the headlong episodic quality of his narratives, the ubiquitous locked trunks—but whereas Godwin always remained focused on the external social world, Brown inevitably penetrated the internal psychological world instead. Brown himself indicated this difference in the distinction he made between *history* and *romance.* "The observer or experimentalist," Brown wrote, "who carefully watches, and faithfully enumerates the appearances which occur, may claim the appellation of *historian.* He who adorns these appearances with cause and effect, and traces resemblances between the past, distant, and future, with the present, performs a different part, he is a dealer, not in certainties, but in probabilities, and is therefore a *romancer.*" The historian was, then, concerned with facts, the romancer with motivation, and the difference between Godwin's orientation and Brown's might be summed up in the subtitles of *Caleb Williams* and of Brown's unpublished novels, *Skywalk: Things as They Are* and *The Man unknown to Himself.*

Brown's interest in psychological motivation probably developed from his intimate friendship with Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith, but it is as likely that he was strongly influenced by another literary model, Samuel Richardson. In several articles Brown eulogized Richardson, minimizing his personal vanity and glorifying his idealized models in contrast to Fielding's all too recognizably flawed human beings. For Brown, Fielding also showed "things as they are" while Richardson concentrated on human motivation. Thus Richardson was more the romancer by Brown's, if not Chase's, definition, and his influence is apparent in the recurrent seduction motif and epistolary style, the idealized characterization and the kind of slow-motion psychological analysis that finds Brown's Jane Talbot remarking, "I have always found an unaccountable pleasure in dissecting, as it were, my heart."

Yet Brown's obsession with motivation led him beyond Richardson into the underbrush of abnormal psychology. Lovelace is an ordinary Don Juan but Wieland is a religious fanatic turned mass murderer. Brown's concern for sensational abnormality was certainly stimulated by his acquaintance with the English gothic tradition, but, significantly, he was influenced by Ann Radcliffe's tales of terror and not "Monk" Lewis's tales of horror. Although Brown also emphasized the rational aspects of sensational phenomena—"biloquism," somnambulism or spontaneous combustion —he went further in suggesting that many instances of terror were purely self-induced. It is this distinction, in fact, that separates Brown from Radcliffe, Richardson and

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Godwin: ultimately, the terror in the world comes not from without but from within.

The significance of this distinction is enormous. Not only does it continually undercut the explicit Godwinian faith in reason that runs through Brown's fiction, but it tends to polarize this belief with a more submerged counterbelief in the ultimate irrationality of human action. Brown stated this perhaps unconscious dialectic most succinctly in an unfinished novel, *Stephen Calvert,* when he wrote: "The wisest and soberest of human beings is, in some respects, a madman; that is, he acts against his better reason, and his feet stand still, or go south, when every motive is busy in impelling him north." This tension became the central concern of *Wieland* and *Ormond,* reminding us of the "duplicity"—what Lawrence called in the work of Cooper, Melville and Hawthorne, "a tight mental allegiance to a morality which all their passion goes to destroy"—that first distinguishes the American novel. Yet this tension does not attain that nervous internal rhythm peculiar to the American novel until Brown's last and best gothic tale, *Edgar Huntly; or, Memoirs of a Sleepwalker.*

Wieland; or, The Transformation, Brown's first published and still most popular novel, depicts the mysterious and catastrophic events that transform the lives of the inhabitants of a pastoral Pennsylvania estate. The narrator, Clara, lives there near her brother, Wieland, his wife, Catherine, and her brother, Pleyel. Soon after the arrival of a brooding vagabond, Carwin, the country quiet is shattered by a series of strange voices that ultimately transform the mutual love shared within the little community into mistrust and madness, hatred and homicide. Responsible for most of the voices is Carwin who confesses that he has used his mysterious talent for ventriloquism to try to seduce Clara and then convince Pleyel that she has been promiscuous. The voice, however, that persuades respected Wieland to murder his family and then attempt the life of his sister comes not from without but from within: a religious mania inherited from his father who was himself consumed (in an act of spontaneous combustion) by fanatic religiosity.

The "transformation" is, of course, Wieland's mysterious metamorphosis from loving husband and father to maniacal murderer; but it is also the less violent transformation of Clara and Pleyel caused by more rational means. As Clara realizes herself: "Was I not likewise transformed from rational and human into a creature of nameless and fearful attributes?" Thus if *Wieland* starts out as a rationalist attack on the excesses of religious enthusiasm it ends up virtually as a Calvinist assault on the conception of the universal efficacy of reason. For not only does Brown suggest that Clara and Pleyel have been victimized by the weakness of their reason but that Wieland's transformation is clearly beyond their rational understanding. "I leave you to moralize on this tale," Clara concludes, "but it will not escape your notice, that the evils . . . owed their existence to the errors of the sufferers." In a sense, *Wieland; or, The Transformation* resembles Kafka's *Metamorphosis.* Its real meaning is that everyone is heir to Wieland's weakness: anyone could become the victim of a tragic transformation.

The primary influences on *Wieland,* as F. L. Pattee noted more than a quarter of a century ago, are Godwin, Richardson and Ann Radcliffe. Carwin, with his fateful "curiosity," is surely derived from Caleb Williams, although physically he resembles the villainous Schedoni in Mrs. Radcliffe's *The Italian.* But the seduction motif, the epistolary form, the idealized characters and, significantly, the female narrator are all derived from Richardson. Our major concern is not so much what in the novel was originally Brown's but what in it was originally American. Carl Van Doren discovered fifty years ago that Brown may have used an actual occurrence in Tomhanick, New York, in 1781 as the basis of his novel, but that does not change the fact that there is nothing particularly American about the treatment. Not only is the form derived from the English, and the villain, Carwin, imported from Ireland, but even the names of people and places—

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Wieland, Pleyel, Mettingen—are unambiguously European. Change a few phrases and *Wieland* could be an English novel taking place in Germany! The American novel had taken its first steps with *Wieland* but it was still quite obviously a child of Europe.

Ormond resembles *Wieland* in many important respects. Again the narrator is a woman, although the title refers to a man. Sophia Courtland tells the story of Constantia Dudley's struggle, first against poverty and the plague in Philadelphia, and then against Ormond's prolonged attempt at seduction. Constantia is the idealized feminine sensibility straight out of Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe,* while Ormond is a Byronic hero with elements of Lovelace and Faust intertwined. In terms of Brown's own work, if Constantia is another Clara Wieland, then Ormond is a more complex Carwin. Ormond's sin is not so much his rational nonconformism as his Faustian search for knowledge and power. "Ormond aspired to nothing more ardently than to hold the reins of opinion—to exercise absolute power over the conduct of others . . . in a way of which his subjects should be scarcely conscious." Like Carwin, whose mimetic gift he shares, Ormond belongs to that long list of American villains—in Hawthorne and James, especially—whose primary sin is the violation of the human personality.

Although *Ormond* is generally considered Brown's second gothic tale, the gothic elements are almost incidental to the tale. Even more than *Wieland* is *Ormond* influenced by Richardson's sentimental novels. In the Preface, Brown indicated that he intended to show the difference between American and European manners, and the first part of *Ormond* is almost totally concerned with social conditions in Philadelphia. But like the English sentimental novels, *Ormond* is a middle-class view of the class struggle as seen through the symbol of the thwarted seduction of a virtuous middle-class maiden. In fact, *Ormond* follows the sentimental tradition so closely that it presents us with not one but four different female sensibilities!

I rather think that *Ormond* leads not to the gothic sensationalism of *Arthur Mervyn* or *Edgar Huntly* but to the clearly sentimental sensibilities of Brown's last two novels, *Clara Howard* and *Jane Talbot.* Critics have usually tended to see these last two novels as separate from the first four: a desperate bid for the popularity that sentimental novels attracted but gothic novels did not. Yet we must keep in mind that Brown wrote quickly, never revised, and often worked on several novels at once. Thus not only do the same characters and incidents appear in different novels but the whole plots of *Clara Howard* and *Jane Talbot* are lifted from earlier works and translated from a gothic setting to a sentimental one. While both novels owe their plots in part to *Edgar Huntly, Clara Howard* is really an inversion of the second part of *Arthur Mervyn,* and *Jane Talbot,* a revision of *Ormond.*

In *Clara Howard,* Philip Stanley is betrothed to older, poorer Mary Wilmot whom he respects, but he wishes to marry younger and richer Clara Howard whom he loves. In *Arthur Mervyn,* Arthur gives up poor, young Eliza in order to marry older and richer Mrs. Fielding. Both Stanley and Mervyn are typical "young men from the provinces" who marry "successfully"; their connubial choices are identical in that they give up someone they feel responsible for in order to marry someone who will feel responsible for them. On the other hand, in *Jane Talbot* the main obstacle to Henry Colden's marriage to Jane is the radical rationalism he espoused in the past. Thus Colden and Ormond are mirror images. Leslie Fiedler correctly describes Ormond as "Colden seen in reverse: at first, apparently an attractive though fanatically radical young man, he is revealed at last as a rapist and murderer. Colden, on the other hand, begins by seeming a thoroughgoing scoundrel, but turns out to be no more than the headstrong exponent of abstract nonconformism." More significant, perhaps, is the fact that in both novels the central conflict occurs between characters with opposing ideological values. Thus *Clara Howard* and *Jane Talbot,* although conceived in the sentimental

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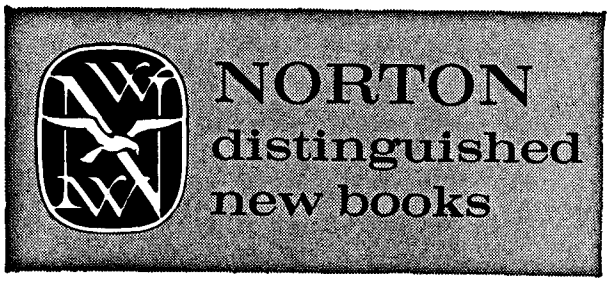

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mode, are less a radical departure from Brown's early work than the extension in new terms of the dialectic of *Wieland* and *Ormond*. They fail not because their form is sentimental but because their reality is sentimentalized.

To move on to *Arthur Mervyn* and *Edgar Huntly* is to leave the world of feminine sensibility behind. In a very real sense, it is also to enter the realm of the peculiarly American novel. Both novels are told from the masculine point of view and both depend upon a uniquely American scene. *Arthur Mervyn* describes in detail the Philadelphia plague sketched in *Ormond,* but *Edgar Huntly* lights out for the territory ahead by utilizing the individualized American landscape as a kind of gothic *paysage moralisé*. And whereas Brown's other novels exhibit a static quality usually associated with the English novel, there is a kind of motion to these two tales, not wholly accounted for by their picaresque nature, that suggests the rhythm of classic American literature.

Arthur Mervyn is the Brown novel most influenced by William Godwin. Its picaresque form, headlong style, reformist zeal, as well as its young, intrepid and eternally "curious" protagonist are all strikingly close to *Caleb Williams*. Like Caleb, Arthur is haunted by a former employer whose guilty secret he is sworn not to reveal. And like Caleb's master, Falkland, Arthur's employer, Welbeck, conceals his crimes under a cloak of social respectability. But Godwin's purpose was to show the way social inequality became social injustice, while Brown's concern is to describe the effects of high social mobility and low public morality. Thus it is significant to note that whereas Caleb's movements are sharply restricted by Falkland's intimidating power, Arthur moves easily (at times, almost frenetically) across geographic and social barriers. Indeed, Arthur's development is defined by his mobility.

Although there are several standard gothic devices used in *Arthur Mervyn*—midnight burials and the like—Brown has sought in the Philadelphia plague a sustaining symbol of terror suspended over the lives of his characters. Like Camus in *La Peste,* Brown uses the plague as a symbolic device to test his actors, thereby reminding us of Clara Wieland's remark: "Alas! nothing but subjection to danger, and exposure to temptation, can show us what we are." Surely, Brown's own experience in the New York plague of 1798—which claimed his best friend, Elihu Hubbard Smith—had a profound effect upon him and upon *Arthur Mervyn*; but it is also clear that Brown had transformed his direct experience into artistic capital, creating consciously a symbol of terror both more meaningful and less artificial than "biloquism" or spontaneous combustion.

Strangely enough, however, Brown chose to split his novel in two. The first half deals with Arthur's attempt to rescue his reputation: the second, with Arthur's philanthropic efforts to rescue the reputations of others. Significantly, the overarching symbol in the first part is the plague; in the second part, it is money. In many ways the two halves of *Arthur Mervyn* do not fit, but it is also clear that for Brown, money, like the plague, was a natural hazard of urban life which honest innocents like Arthur must learn to deal with. Yet the imperfect seam that runs through the middle of *Arthur Mervyn* like a scar suggests also that the two parts are incompatible. While the first book shows a society being split apart, the second closes the breach too easily, hinting, as Werner Berthoff maintains, that "in *Arthur Mervyn* the dark fable of transformation has become a comedy of success." Thus *Arthur Mervyn* begins as a gothic tale and ends as a sentimental novel, suggesting yet another bridge between the worlds of *Wieland* and *Jane Talbot*.

"In Arthur, Brown embodies the spirit of beneficence," insisted Lulu Ramsey Wiley, adding that "the author identifies himself fully with the character." No doubt Brown would have agreed, for he wrote that Arthur "had displayed inimitable and heroic qualities. His courage was the growth of benevolence and reason, and not the child of insensibility and the nursling of habit. He had been qualified

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for the encounter of gigantic dangers by no laborious education. He stepped forth upon the stage, unfurnished, by anticipating or experience, with the means of security against fraud; and yet, by the aid of pure intentions, had frustrated the wiles of an accomplished and veteran deceiver." In one sense this is true and Arthur is merely the first poor boy in American fiction who rises to the top by marrying the boss's daughter—or a rich widow. Yet in another sense Brown could not help denying exactly that which he was affirming; and the richness of the novel is partly the richness of this "duplicity." For Arthur combines generous innocence—as when he decides precipitately to reform Philadelphia's corrupt hospital system—with a calculating shrewdness—as when he spurns poor Eliza for rich Mrs. Fielding—to a degree that suggests the enlightened self-interest of a Poor Richard. In Mrs. Fielding we glimpse not only the mother image that Brown's protagonists so passionately seek—as with many American writers there are no real parents in Brown's fictive world—but also the financial security that Brown himself could never find in writing. The happy ending of *Arthur Mervyn*—unique in Brown's gothic novels—seems more suitable to the daydream than to the novel. If the ending suggests another, more successful writer-printer who came to Philadelphia, advocated doing good and married a rich widow, the resemblance may be purely coincidental. Yet the ambiguities in Arthur's character, like the frenetic unreality of his success story, hint that the tale and the artist may point to different morals.

If *Arthur Mervyn* is Brown's most extroverted novel, then *Edgar Huntly; or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* must be his most introverted tale. Whereas Arthur sallied out to meet the challenges of a new society, Edgar withdraws from the social world and descends into the underground caves of unconscious experience. Here daydream has given way to nightmare. *Edgar Huntly* was the first American novel to use the wild American landscape as a gothic symbol of the unconscious psyche. In a prefatory note Brown proposed "to exhibit a series of adventures, growing out of the condition of our country" and to call "forth the passions and [engage] the sympathy of the reader by means hitherto unemployed by preceding authors." In place of "puerile superstition and exploded manners, Gothic castles and chimeras," he insisted that for the American writer, "the incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the Western wilderness, are far more suitable." The Preface to *Edgar Huntly* is the first manifesto of the American novel, and Brown is the first in the long tradition of American artists, like Cooper and Hawthorne, who found in the American landscape a suitable substitute for the lack of manners in American society.

More significantly, however, *Edgar Huntly* is the first American novel in which the theme of pursuit and flight is absolutely central. In search of the murderer of his fiancée's brother, Waldegrave, Edgar Huntly discovers Clithero Edny, yet another Irish refugee, sleepwalking near the site of the recent murder. Suspecting Clithero of the murder, Edgar confronts him and extracts a confession of a previous crime which Clithero believes (mistakenly) that he has perpetrated on his Irish benefactress, Mrs. Lorimer. Clithero's sleepwalking is a manifestation of the heavy guilt he feels and, having confessed his crime to Huntly, he withdraws from society to live in the wilds of Pennsylvania. Obsessed with helping Clithero, Edgar follows him into the wilderness. One night Edgar wakes up to find himself lying in a mysterious, deep pit, having unknowingly become a victim of somnambulism also. In attempting to find his way back to civilization, Edgar becomes involved in a series of seemingly unrelated adventures, killing a panther and some hostile Indians who were Waldegrave's real murderers, before the melodramatic denouement in which the maniacal Clithero drowns and Edgar is painfully reunited with his old protector, Sarsefield, who has married Clithero's old benefactress, Mrs. Lorimer.

When one penetrates these intricate involutions of plot it becomes clear that Ed-

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gar is meant to recapitulate the experiences of Clithero in order to learn that he, too, is not free from guilt. For Edgar's underground adventures are, like his somnambulism, at once real and psychic. Like Clara Wieland, Edgar discovers that even "the wisest and soberest of human beings is, in some respects, a madman." And while Clara and Wieland are blood relations, Edgar discovers that he is tied to Clithero's fate by a bond that is just as strong. Similarly, Arthur and Welbeck and Constantia and Ormond are also related in the sense that they are all mirror images—and one turn of the screw can reverse their positions. Just as Clithero believes that he is responsible for Mrs. Lorimer's death so Edgar becomes responsible—against his best intentions—for Clithero's death and Mrs. Lorimer's miscarriage.

Leslie Fiedler observed that *Edgar Huntly* seems more dreamed than written, but it might be more accurate to say that the book reads more like a dream than like a novel. Edgar's descent into the American wilderness is clearly meant to be a symbolic pilgrimage like those of Pym, Ahab and Huck. Edgar's story is a pure tale of pursuit and flight in which the pursuer, like Pym and Ahab, suddenly finds himself transformed into the pursued. As in the classic American novels, the pursuit is meant to be dual, the external action following the logic of the internal action until, at some magical point, the two become one and the movement itself becomes the subject of the novel. But near the end—as in *Pym* and *The Confidence Man*—the narrative breaks down and Brown, diving deep into the blackness of darkness, found himself incapable of diving deeper. Afraid, perhaps, of what he had found, Brown contented himself with a surface reality he could control in his last two sentimental novels—and then stopped writing fiction. Still, Brown's contribution to American literature was considerable, even profound. The Preface to *Edgar Huntly* can be considered the trumpet blast announcing the beginning of an independent American fiction. The novel itself was a call to arms not unrecognized by Cooper, Hawthorne and Poe.

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The Postwar American Novel

A View from the Periphery

ANTHONY BURGESS

I have given up trying to look at literature as the emanation of a language rather than of a racial or national or regional consciousness. To be honest, I think that it has always been a little disingenuous of me to expect Americans to accept the term "English Novel" as meaning "the Novel in English." We in England have wanted too long to regard the American Novel as a regional aspect of the English (national, not linguistic) Novel. We can still contrive to see the Australian Novel as leaping out of D. H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo,* or the Anglo-Indian Novel as the terminus of *A Passage to India,* but the American Novel has (if we will be honest with ourselves) always been a distinct genre from Hawthorne onward. In the last twenty years the English have been prepared to admit as much, but also to go further than is either healthy or necessary. We know we are on the periphery of world power, but there is no reason for us to regard ourselves as being on the artistic periphery as well. Yet we tend to look to the future of the Novel in English as belonging wholly to America, with our Waughs and Greenes and Powells as provincial satellites, their art charming but calligraphic.

This is not solely because of America's status as one of the two world dynasts, nor because of a wealth that is able to give writing men prizes, sabbaticals and huge advances, as well as—America being the only English-using country that has literary magazines—chances of highly paid serialization. It is rather that American novelists seem to possess the courage to deal with big themes thrown up by contemporary history, whereas we in England tend to be too satisfied with provincial subject matter—class, hypergamy, suburban adultery. Our World War II was longer than America's, yet no substantial British novel came out of that war. It had to be left to Norman Mailer with *The Naked and the Dead,* Gore Vidal with *Williwaw* (and he was only nineteen when he wrote it), John Horne Burns with *The Gallery* and, most recently, Joseph Heller with *Catch-22* to make the big statements about war's mess and futility. Perhaps we in England failed to see any mythic content in that six-year gray struggle: we wanted it to be a parenthesis, not part of that current which gives themes to artists. If so, we were wrong. Only Evelyn Waugh, with his *Sword of Honour* trilogy, recorded the European conflict at any length and in any depth, and he recorded less the war itself than the death of a British social class, an incidental casualty of that war. Like Ford Madox Ford before him, he was primarily concerned with seeing how a "gentleman" behaved in camp

ANTHONY BURGESS says his original ambitions were mixed, although all artistic. He wished to be a cartoonist (published cartoon in *Manchester Guardian* in 1929), a composer (several orchestral and chamber works performed, from 1939 on), a poet (various prizes). Only in his late thirties did he turn to fiction, and since then he has published, both in England and America, some sixteen novels, as well as works of criticism. His most recent novel is *The Long Day Wanes.*

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and battle. Our class system continues to get in the way of the basic human truths; the Americans are not so inhibited.

Many of the American novelists who continue to interest British readers started off with war books. Gore Vidal, nourishing the seed of the male community theme—a gift of wars, as of monasteries—went further, in *The City and the Pillar,* than any British author had yet dared to do in portraying homosexual love. Mailer took up the theme of the power struggle, finely and disturbingly expressed in *The Naked and the Dead,* and developed it in a novel that said more to Europeans than to Americans, if one may judge by American reviews—I mean *Barbary Shore,* which seemed to us to be in the Koestler-Orwell tradition with a flavoring of Kafka. Away from this theme, he has floundered badly: *The Deer Park* was disappointing; *An American Dream* plays with evil without being quite sure what evil is. J. D. Salinger, in his short story "For Esmé with Love and Squalor," was, in a war context, already adumbrating his theme of innocence (a regenerative spring in a bad world) beset by adult forces which are either malevolent or phony. *The Catcher in the Rye* was as important to us as to young America; it gave us a dialect of candid and innocent protest, healthier than the shouts and batterings of our own angries. But, looking back at Holden Caulfield from the Glass house which is being built so slowly, we begin not to be too sure how genuine Holden is; sometimes now the candor looks contrived and the innocence seems sentimental. We cluck and tut over Mailer and Salinger quite as much as their compatriots do, worrying about their development. There are too many *homines unius libri* among the younger American writers, we feel; we want to see signs of an *œuvre.* What is John Barth doing after *The Sot-Weed Factor;* what is Heller planning after *Catch-22?* Vidal is safe; *Julian* is a superb historical novel. John Horne Burns wrote *Lucifer with a Book*—a fine, vigorous indictment of the phony in American education—then died. In England we still admire the shelf builders; the romantic figure with the single big work—cut off from fulfillment of huge promise by death, discouragement or inanition—has become very American. Herman Wouk was, I think, trying to say something about this in his interesting but uneven *Youngblood Hawke.*

The massive single novel, of Dickensian or Proustian or Joycean dimensions, is something that England has almost ceased to produce. Apart from their subject matter, I cannot imagine an English novelist achieving the sweep of William Styron in *Lie Down in Darkness* or *Set This House on Fire.* I am not being old-fashioned in regarding length itself as somehow admirable in the novel. Even the mediocrities of James Jones have at least the courage to charter a big boat for a big sea, however unprosperous the voyage. I think again it is the assumption of the American novelist that he can, if he wants to, always find a large theme, whereas we in England have few large themes left. We missed our opportunities when we had an empire: only in one man, Kipling, did mystical belief in empire and great literary genius come together, but Kipling was no novelist. The *romans-fleuves* of Snow and Powell seem to limit themselves to the chronicling of class —no epic subject. America still has itself, and the Whitmanesque expansiveness can reappear in the most unexpected places—in Kerouac, for instance. Even the examination of a racial consciousness outside the pale of the WASP can have a vigor which we can only call American. I am thinking of James Baldwin's novels and the works of those writers whom we must call Jewish-American—Bellow, Malamud, Herbert Gold.

England has her racial problems, but no novelist with Baldwin's fire—which I, in my tepid English way, sometimes think too hot for its subject—has yet come forward here. Our West Indian writers are sooner or later drawn into the English tradition, so that V. S. Naipaul—one of our best novelists, and a Trinidadian—comes closer all the time to E. M. Forster. We are, of course, a great nation for compromise, whereas America is a great nation for juxtaposition.

One of the problems that face the outsider looking at the American novel is in

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deciding how far the recent exile can justly claim to have entered its tradition, whatever —Whitmanesque breadth and revolutionary fire apart—that tradition is. Christopher Isherwood's *A Single Man* seems to me an American novel, whereas Aldous Huxley's *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* does not. Huxley assumes that American culture is on the periphery of Europe, while Isherwood (whose hero is as British as Huxley's) comments on American civilization as an American would. I think there is also a matter of prose rhythm, hard to analyze and not just a matter of locutions like "gotten." Auden's postwar poems sound best when delivered with an American accent, and the prose of *A Single Man* calls for a similar dryness, an eschewal of orotundity: it is something to do with the difference between the flavor of port and the flavor of a martini. Or, put it another way, the sweetness of nostalgia seems missing from American prose, whereas we British writers are still bedeviled by it. Faulkner can get away with the poetic peroration at the end of *The Mansion* because it doesn't relate directly to the British romantic tradition: it fits easily into the Faulknerian turgidity but one is aware of it as a deliberate importation, a rather cold fastening-on.

Whether to call Vladimir Nabokov an American novelist is one of the biggest of our problems. The narrators of both *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* are civilized foreigners self-conscious about their American exile, and they tend to a creative pedantry which, as in James Joyce, seems a mark of the *émigré* European: lacking a country, he clings to a language. But when I say that neither *Lolita* nor *Pale Fire* could have been written outside America I do not just mean that the annotation of American *mœurs* from the inside is central to them both. I mean rather that experimentation in English is now tolerated in America to an extent no longer possible in England, and that literary or philological scholarship conjoins with creative writing in—so far as I can judge—a perfectly natural way. Our British scholars may (like J. I. M. Stewart) produce intellectual thrillers in their spare time, but we have hardly a single instance of a scholar who is also a serious novelist or poet. Again, the British ideal of a novelist is to be found in Lord Snow, whose approach to language is strictly utilitarian and no-nonsense. Once admit the exciting pedantry of a Nabokov, and the public and the publishers shy. The state of academic scholarship and the state of the novel are of necessity related, but that social dynamism which inevitably modifies language must also have something to say to the literary artist. The Americans have to invent a new vocabulary and new rhythms in order to make articulate new approaches to the world; America is increasingly expansive while England tends to contract. Thus linguistic experiment in art must, in America, seem an integral part of the social process, not mere coterie preciousness.

I must not let it appear that we are masochistically prepared to yield primacy to America in the art of fiction totally without a struggle, indulging in that typically British disparagement of the home product which foreigners can so easily misunderstand. I think more bad novels have come out of America in the past twenty years than out of the British Commonwealth—best-selling sexstuff (we all believe that America produces the best pornography), books about political corruption whose apparent honesty is really cynical sensationalism, historical panoramas in ghastly prose. But the bad novels are rarely bad in a niggling cheap way: they all subscribe to the doctrine that massiveness is a virtue in itself; they are horrible not like a squalid shack but like a vulgar skyscraper. Again, a country that has great opportunities for satire has not taken them often enough: *The Loved One* should have been written by an American. When satire *has* appeared it has frequently been too muscle-bound to move quickly—this is true of *Catch-22*. There has not been enough writing of intricate delicacy—although here I except Nabokov and Peter De Vries: the latter is surely one of the great prose virtuosos of modern America. But if we attempt a catalogue of important world fiction published since World War II, we shall find that America will lend it an inordinate number of names. Above

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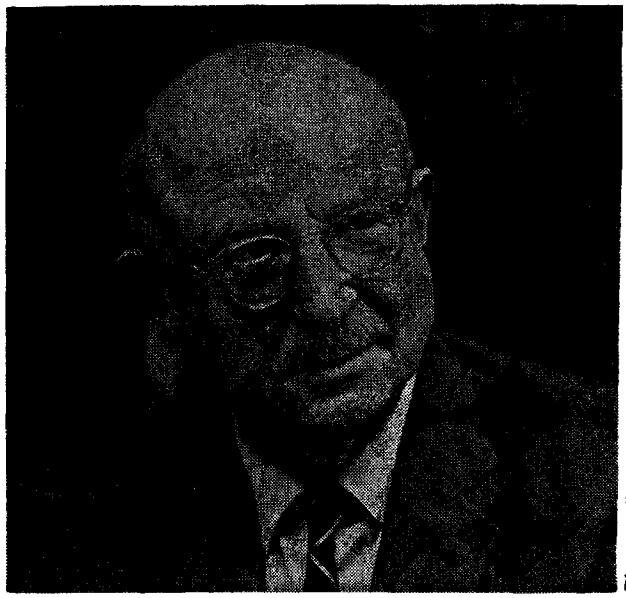

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all, the novel is taken seriously in America, even if the seriousness occasionally approaches the solemnity of Hemingway's bloody owl.

The novel is taken seriously because criticism is taken seriously. No American novelist of any stature, knowing he has done bad work, can expect to be let off with a few disparaging epigrams at the foot of a seven-hundred-word article devoted to five or six authors. American journalism holds on to the tradition of the long review; Britain lost it during the war, along with the literary periodical. When a British critic reviews, he knows that his appraisal is too brief to be true criticism; an American critic finds space—and the leisure bought with a good fee—to write for a kind of posterity. Posterity may not greatly interest the American novelist, but those qualities posterity might be expected to be interested in tend, far more than with his British counterpart, to find their way into his work—massiveness, the panoramic vision, a sense of history and (perhaps most of all) a powerful national awareness.

Scarce Data From China

MAO AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION. *By Jerome Ch'ên. Oxford University Press. $7.50.*

Reviewed by JOHN K. FAIRBANK

This latest addition to a large literature on Chairman Mao has the special merit of being based on an extensive combing of his *Selected Works*. The author is lecturer in Asian history at the University of Leeds. His narrative of Mao's career is supplemented by "Thirty-seven Poems by Mao Tse-tung, translated from the Chinese by Michael Bullock and Jerome Ch'ên" with useful annotations, plus a full bibliography arranged by periods, a chronology, and five appendices of data mainly on the Red Army.

This contribution will be properly appreciated if its limitations are first understood. It does not aim to go into the vicissitudes of doctrine but rather to concentrate on Mao's career down to 1949. This produces a narrative of his early years that is certainly one of the most careful and detailed thus far available. It is set in the context of contemporary warlord struggles treated in considerable detail (thanks no doubt to Mr. Ch'ên's earlier work on Yüan Shih-k'ai) and of the May Fourth Movement among the Chinese intelligentsia. We see Mao emerging as a Marxist and in 1921 one of the Party founders, but he is neither a big city youth experienced among factory workers nor a natural bureaucrat happy to operate in the first Kuomintang-Communist united front structure. In Shanghai in 1924 he is not a success. Instead, he is really at home among the peasants of Hunan, whither he "retreats" (Ch'ên agrees with Conrad Brandt's term). Mao then comes to the fore after the united front collapse of 1927—not much of an "organization man."

Continuing his pulling together of Chinese references, Mr. Ch'ên then details the "Autumn Harvest" rising, the "Revolutionary Bases," the "Five Encirclements" by the Nationalist forces, and the "Long March," all with a good deal of stress on military aspects. Agreeing generally with Benjamin Schwartz on the nature of the "Maoist strategy," he contributes mainly, I think, by amassing the details of events in this central formative period.

From this point on, the last hundred pages of the book fall off because Mr. Ch'ên's method of careful collation of scarce data is not so effective for painting and evaluating the vast panorama of Japan's invasion, the wartime united front, the civil war, and the Communist victory. Even Chairman Mao cannot dominate this enormous stage. The narrative becomes just another bird's-eye summary of the manifold and intractable complexities of the period. Nevertheless, it still presents many useful points from the record and will be appreciated by future researchers.

✪ JOHN K. FAIRBANK is director of the East Asian Research Center and Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History at Harvard University. He is the author of various works on Chinese history.

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Lively and Definitive

POLITICS IN THE CONGO: Decolonization and Independence. *By Crawford Young. Princeton University Press. $12.50.*

Reviewed by PAUL E. SIGMUND

Mention the words, "The Congo," to the average informed American and he conjures up an image of chaos, confusion, savagery and ignorance. To some the events in the Congo since its independence only confirm what they already suspected, that Africans are incapable of self-government and the recent rush to independence by the African and other underdeveloped countries is all a terrible mistake. The Lumumba jokes of five years ago no longer circulate now that our attentions have shifted elsewhere, but the attitudes they revealed still remain.

Mention the words, "The Congo," to many informed Asians, Africans or Latin Americans, and a different picture emerges. After decades of exploitation by the Europeans, the Congolese people finally threw off their shackles, only to see the one Congolese leader truly dedicated to national independence, Patrice Lumumba, removed from power and subsequently murdered by the "imperialists" and their African "stooges." When a Council of National Liberation attempted to reconquer the country in 1964, it was brutally suppressed by white South African mercenaries, aided by Belgian paratroopers and American transport planes. Along with Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, the Congo is for these observers a graphic demonstration of the determination of the "colonialists" to maintain their control over the less developed countries.

This definitive study, *Politics in the Congo,* by Crawford Young shows that both these views are caricatures. Based on several years of research in the United States, Belgium and the Congo, it brings together in

✪ PAUL E. SIGMUND is associate professor of politics at Princeton University. He is the author of *The Ideologies of the Developing Nations, Nicholas of Cusa and Medieval Political Thought,* and articles on classical and contemporary political ideas and institutions.

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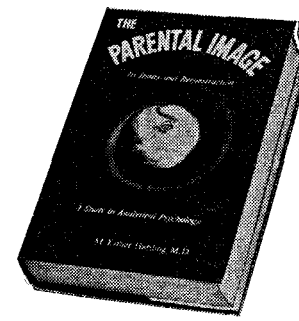

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one volume nearly all there is to know about political events in the Congo between 1959 and the present. This necessitates a length (659 pages) and price ($12.50) that may deter some readers, but the style is lively, the information complete, and the judgments, in this reviewer's opinion, fundamentally sound. For those who feel that a work of this length tells them more about the Congo than they really want to know, the chapters on the rise of nationalism, the brilliant survey of politics from 1960 to 1963, the discussion of the parliament and parties, and the epilogue covering the events of 1964 are especially recommended.

The book answers questions not answered elsewhere. Why, for instance, did the Belgians give up so easily when, thanks to Belgian paternalism, the Congo did not have any anticolonialist agitation until 1959? Young outlines the reasons for the Belgian "gamble" on independence: the breakdown of the colonial administration in the Lower Congo; the increased cost of the colony; the provision of the Belgian constitution that only volunteers could be used to defend the colonies; the hope that the moderate majority of the local elections of 1959 would reappear in 1960; and the nature of the party competition among the Africans which required that each outbid the other in the demand for independence. He blames the breakdown after independence partly on the intransigence of the Belgian commander of the Congolese army, partly on the extreme reaction of the Belgian army when it intervened, partly on the gullibility of the Africans who believed the wild rumors about massacres and a Russian invasion, and partly on the timidity of the civil servants who fled at the first sign of trouble. These, however, would have been merely temporary difficulties, had it not been for the secession of Katanga. Here the book makes its most significant contribution, outlining the long history of Katangan separatism and the tribal rivalries that underlay the proclamation of Katangan independence by Provincial President Tshombe, twelve days after the Congo achieved self-government.

Tribalism is one of the recurrent themes of the book. The author prefers to call it "cultural pluralism" so as to emphasize the parallel with similar phenomena in Europe and the United States, and his research has revealed that many of the groups described by a common name are not in fact ethnically related. Yet related or not, these groups are, now more than ever, the basis of Congolese politics in a way that, with the possible exception of Nigeria, has no parallel in the rest of Africa.

The tribal or group divisions of the Congo also relate to the issue of federalism versus the unitary state, which underlay the conflict between Lumumba and Kasavubu and Tshombe. The latter two were federalists, although in very different ways, and the unitary formula seems never to have been a real possibility in a country the size of the United States east of the Mississippi and in a situation in which there was no time for the establishment of the single nationalist party characteristic of so many other African independence movements.

This unique character of Congolese politics makes facile generalizations about the capacity of Africans for self-government inapplicable. In the Congo, unlike most other African states, there was no trained elite, no long-standing nationalist movement, no indigenous middle class, and no intention by the colonizers to grant independence until the last minute. Today, Young's study brings out, Congolese politicians are more experienced and realistic, the administration reasonably capable, and the army shaping up into what will probably be the most important force in future Congolese politics. And underlying it all is an economy that has survived the troubles of the last five years remarkably well, and an Africanized church and mission system that carried on its work throughout the crises.

For the critics from the left and in the developing areas, Young also has some surprises. He sees the U.N. intervention in the Congo not as a plot by the Western powers, but as a political operation that had its own goals and purposes determined by pressures and counterpressures in the governing bodies in New York. In like manner, Belgian policy varied both before and after

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independence, depending on the nature of the government coalition in Brussels. The big corporations in Katanga, Young believes, also had no consistent policy, acting in different ways at different times and places. Most important, Young's epilogue analyzes the 1964 revolts in a way that seems to prove conclusively that they were rural, tribalist and reactionary, rather than either Communist or progressive in character.

It is customary for a reviewer to make some negative comments but this is difficult to do in such an excellent study. Perhaps some further attention should have been given to the events of January 1959. The Leopoldville riots are often referred to but discussed only midway in the book, while the Belgian statement of January 13th is frequently mentioned but never analyzed. There are also a few technical points. Priests are not "confirmed" (p. 13), they are "ordained"; and the English equivalent of the ecclesiastical title, "Abbé," is not "Abbey" (pp. 276 and 559), but "Abbé." "Lugardism" (p. 129) is a term only understandable to the professional Africanist, and "Lusitanian" (p. 509) to the classicist. But these are minor points in a fine study of an extraordinarily complicated subject.

Challenge for Historians

BRITISH POLITICS IN THE COLLECTIVIST AGE. *By Samuel H. Beer. Knopf. $8.50.*

Reviewed by R. K. WEBB

On this occasion, sending compliments in all directions, I wish THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR were the old *Edinburgh Review.* To have, say, forty pages to review Pro-

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fessor Beer's book would not only allow justice to be done to his argument and method but would make it possible to develop an independent essay on one or another aspect of modern British government. Although that device was not always a tribute in the hands of *Edinburgh* reviewers, I recall it here to indicate how stimulating the book is. One wants, not to give a hurried summary, but to quibble, to quarrel, to ask more questions, and to pursue a dozen different lines of thought, both about the past and the present.

Professor Beer begins by isolating four old (and not entirely extinct) types or styles of politics—Old Tory, Old Whig, Liberal and Radical. His admirable distillations of these types, drawn from a generation of historians, serve to introduce a fifth type, Collectivist politics, which exists in two competing incarnations, the Socialist and the Tory Democrat. The main body of the book is a highly complex and sophisticated analysis of the Collectivist style in twentieth-century Britain. In examining the Labor and Conservative parties in turn, he brings into his argument important discussions of the interplay of ideals and policies, the structure of party organization, the tension between leaders and rank and file, and the expanding relationships between government and the functional groups of which modern society is composed. This last is no simple matter, however it may appear in the myths of political journalists and puzzled or suspicious voters. In the early eighteenth century Daniel Defoe argued that the financiers in the City of London were no mere puppet masters: the allegation that "they who have the money shall have the management" might better have been read as "they who have the management shall have the money." In an industrial society, the range of mutual dependence of government and groups runs far beyond small groups of monied men or companies, or the political complexes that grew up around great aristocrats. Although everyone in the bargain knows that government has near-ultimate coercive powers, government needs the information, advice and cooperation that many organized groups can give; far beyond the ballot box, it relies on their consent. No doubt the greatest originality of Professor Beer's book lies in his analysis of this vital symbiotic relationship.

A larger theme emerges, however. Over the past two generations, historians and political scientists have painstakingly examined the structure and function of political institutions; in their concentration on the organization of power, the incidental (and in some cases intentional) result has been to depreciate the role of ideology. Drawing widely and persuasively on these researches, Professor Beer goes beyond them to conclude that ideology is central in marking the ultimate, unbridgeable gulf between the two parties. Mr. Robert McKenzie, the leading authority in Britain on the structure of British political parties, has already violently dissented from Professor Beer's conclusions on this score (in the *Observer*, September 5, 1965), but I think that, properly understood, Professor Beer has the better of the argument. He does not mean ideology as detailed dogmatics, although Labor party ideology was highly programmatic between the wars and determined the shape of its postwar legislation. Indeed, Professor Beer emphasizes the extent to which it is now difficult to distinguish between the policies of the two parties, in or even out of power; certainly it is to strengthen this part of his case that the present Labor Government's Tory-like economic measures must be used, not, as Mr. McKenzie does, to attack Professor Beer's complementary argument about the ideological differences that remain. I believe that Professor Beer is right to argue that, despite increasingly marginal policy differences (much of the identity in policy is forced by circumstances beyond the control of any British party or government), the two parties are about different things and "reflect contrasting conceptions of the common good." In the simplest terms, one party is about equality, the other about hierarchy, and the two assumptions are irreconcilable. Education is one area of policy, not dealt with here, where those assumptions are still evident, but circumstances might some day bring the two parties closer together

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even on that. If one is looking for a test case for Professor Beer's conclusion, it is probably to be found in Mr. Heath in the future, not in Mr. Wilson now.

As an historian, I have two small comments on Professor Beer's argument. He is somewhat apologetic about suggesting that Socialist thought between the wars was old-fashioned—ethical rather than economic—but he might have buttressed his case had he been able to spare more space to consider the impact of the First World War on men's consciousness, the intellectual equipment (or lack of it) in the emerging Labor movement, and the fits and starts of trade-union behavior in the early 1920's. But no such reservations can be made about his historical analysis of the Conservatives; certainly his most valuable historical insight is to be found in his demonstration of the intellectually consistent part played by the National Government, and by Neville Chamberlain in particular, in bringing about what Professor Beer calls the Managed Economy.

This book is certain to interest anyone concerned about Britain today, but it is interesting to speculate about how it will strike the academic world. Fragmented as that world is, it will probably be read mostly by those who specialize in the study of government and not by historians. But historians should read it, and not only those who work on twentieth-century politics. At first sight, most historians might be somewhat put off by the approach. Narrative is rigorously (and rightly) subordinated to argument; the argument, moreover, is not historical. By nature the historian is relatively unsystematic: as one colleague put it to me, "we rattle around in some material and finally we come up with something." At its best, this intuitive approach can be completely successful; because it issues in a convincing construction of the evidence, it cannot be said to be less "scientific" than any other approach. By contrast, Professor Beer is systematic and theoretical. He will, typically, isolate an essentially historical situation and then ask what elitist or pluralist theory has to suggest about it; formidably equipped with the conceptual tools of his

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trade, he tests his material in, so to speak, precast forms. In unskillful hands, this operation can be as sterile as the "rattling around" of the historian who comes up with mere chronicle; but at its best, as here, it is no mere application of a template; rather, perceived patterns provide a means of cutting quickly into the material and, when the theories turn out to be not quite predictive or convincing, of formulating alternative hypotheses. The approach is novel to historians but not unexampled: the greatest of modern historians of modern Britain, Elie Halévy, was a master of analysis through the imposition of a framework of ideas, derived in his case from his philosophical training. Professor Beer has not only provided an interpretation of twentieth-century British political history that is certain to affect all future thinking about it, but he has also provided one of the most serious and healthy challenges in years to the normal professional timidity of historians.

A Matter for Regret

THE PROTESTANT ESTABLISHMENT: Aristocracy and Caste in America. *By E. Digby Baltzell. Random House. $6.95.*

Reviewed by JOHN N. MORRIS

The "Protestant Establishment" is of course a minority, as any establishment is by definition. And it is a beleagured if not yet a persecuted one. For the culture has recognized the new, diminished stature of the genteel gentile. Since World War II—the date, as Professor Baltzell recognizes, is significant—descendants of the wops, kikes, micks and frogs of another era have asserted their equality with and amusement at their predecessors in the possession of America, the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, by inventing for them a new name, in parody of the terms of abuse dear to gentlemen,

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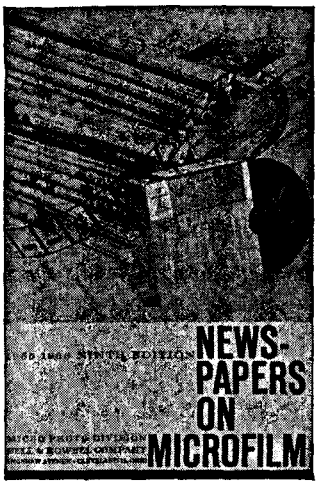

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the acronym WASP. In its mixture of geniality with mild contempt, this is an interesting and serious joke. The old order, it declares, is dangerous no longer, or not very. It may buzz and annoy. It may even sting, but the poison does not kill: the word, after all, is WASP, not (as it might have been, for the "W" is logically superfluous) ASP.

The new impotence of old America is the subject of Baltzell's book. The interest of his account and analysis of it has nothing to do with novelty, for little here is news, good or bad. The D.A.R. has always been a comic organization; and it is scarcely a secret that (with few although notable exceptions) the demonic energies of the great nineteenth-century accumulators have issued, two generations later, in a social rigidity destructive of the class it means to protect and a political fatuity its practitioners disguise (if only from themselves) as action from first principles. Baltzell's originality is to conceive of the modern history of the American upper class as a matter for sincere and disinterested regret.

In itself, to be sure, his thesis impresses one with something less than the force of revelation. The old American aristocracy, he suggests, in unconscious suicidal imitation of the French nobility, has transformed itself into a caste, refusing (unlike the English upper class) to earn anew in each generation its title to prestige and to rejuvenate itself by continual, judicious recruitment from below. In thus opting for position rather than power, this class has abdicated the leadership of its country and is rapidly declining into a frivolous lethargy from which it can be aroused only to vote for Goldwater or to tell its candidate that he may not play golf at a Maryland country club. Stated so baldly, there is little here to surprise or detain the reader, who knows all *that* already. But Baltzell's book is not quite so simple. It is not merely a description of facts that we, like the author, learned from Tocqueville and observation. In a time uncongenial to such an ideal, Baltzell manages to assert the claims of aristocracy as a possible and a socially useful conception. The authority with which he endows this notion flows, I think, from the tone in which he enunciates it. He is above all unembarrassed by the idea of the reality of class and the necessity that in society—even, or especially, democratic society—power come somewhere to a focus. Suspicion of power, and particularly of power located for long at any one social level, is an inheritance we owe more to European revolutionary experience than to our own. What we have to fear is the diffusion of authority, not its concentration. Such suspicion is nevertheless a fact of our life, a national prejudice or superstition against which it is difficult to speak without being made to feel that one has committed a breach of American manners. But Baltzell writes as one who seems to have mastered or never to have known that difficulty. To him, unlike many of the rest of us, "gentleman" is an unambiguous term.

Much about the book suggests that Baltzell's unself-conscious assurance arises from his own membership in the class he here criticizes. In his choice of profession—he is a professor, and moreover not a professor of English or French or history but of something so inelegant as sociology—he has in some degree dissociated himself from that class, whose members (as he points out) are often, to say the least, suspicious of mind. But it is dissociation merely, not alienation. A compromise of this sort must often be most uncomfortable. Colleges and universities used to be full of men who, forced by the dissipation of old fortunes into a profession in which it was just possible to get by on charm and very moderate intellectual gifts, lived their lives distracted between social contempt for their colleagues (and most of their students) and envy of energy less vitiatingly divided against itself. But unlike those sorry creatures, Baltzell can use the word "honorable" and make it mean something.

That simple and serious word, and its opposite, are not much in use, at least in application to private persons and private acts. I, at any rate, have seldom heard either word uttered of any man or his acts without somewhere a trace of irony. More and more we reserve the terms for the deeds of states and public men, meaning by the words lit-

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tle more than approval or disapproval, with the result that the categories are politicized and drained of positive moral interest. It is not odd that this should be so. Perhaps the words as they were once employed imply in the speaker a clarity of moral perception and a confidence of judgment that seem nowadays to combine naïveté with arrogance. For now we know, or think we do, that the sources of character and action are indefinable, that motive and deed are more cunningly articulated than the eye of conscience or judgment can discern. The old epigram must be modified. To understand all would now be, perhaps, to condemn all. To understand how little we may know is to forgive. The simplicity of such terms as "honorable" and "dishonorable," we seem to believe, is *too* simple.

In any event, the decline of these terms has to do with Baltzell's thesis. For they have unambiguous meaning chiefly about and among men exempt from economic necessity—*free* men, who in the act of choice need bend to no external pressures but obey *only* the promptings of conscience, leading in a degree denied most of us the unconditioned moral life. The failures of nerve, taste and mind that Baltzell describes are, then, moral failures. The old American families have shunned their opportunities for virtue as if they were the occasions of sin.

Baltzell's account of this melancholy history focuses on the genesis and continuing vigor of anti-Semitism among the American upper class. Here, of course, he covers familiar ground. Who *cares* what the admissions committee of a country club in Brookline thinks of Jews? Their notions are absurd, but irrelevant. Let them stew in their own unsavory juices. And it is true that Baltzell makes a little too much of clubs and what they represent; they impress him more than they should. But the increasing irrelevance of the clubman view of life is his real subject, and anti-Semitism is merely a symptom of it. Beginning in the latter nineteenth century, men and families once at the center of necessary and reputable power gradually retreated from their positions of command, leaving the society they had once the opportunity to lead to blunder without coherent direction into an increasingly problematic future. Here is the real frivolity of the rich and the powerful, which has little to do with bad behavior and tasteless extravagance (in these their social inferiors have usually emulated rather than condemned them).

It may be argued that the old upper class might not in fact have been capable of directing American history as perhaps it should, and as Baltzell hopes, however faintly, it might still, if it changed its ways. Possibly its spirit and energy were played out, and its decline into a caste its own recognition of its incurable debility. But Baltzell's book has the charm and—I think—the merit of presenting the story of that self-imposed decline into irrelevance as more nearly tragic than comic.

Praise for an "Original"

WHEREAS—A Judge's Premises. *By Charles E. Wyzanski, Jr. Little, Brown. $6.75.*

Reviewed by JAMES ROWE

Not so long ago bench and bar were astounded by Charles Wyzanski, the Senior Federal District Judge for Massachusetts. In a blistering letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee Judge Wyzanski denounced President Johnson's nominee for the District Court vacancy in Massachusetts, Francis X. Morrissey, as completely unqualified. Eventually Senator Edward Kennedy, Morrissey's sponsor, withdrew his name. No past or present official of the Department of Justice could recall a sitting Federal Judge publicly and voluntarily objecting to a possible colleague.

Once and for all this incident proved (although for the informed it was hardly necessary) that, whatever else he may be, Judge Wyzanski is indeed an "original"! He has been, as a matter of fact, a variety of

✪ JAMES ROWE, a Washington attorney, was law clerk to Mr. Justice Holmes, Administrative Assistant to President Roosevelt, Assistant Attorney General of the United States and Technical Adviser to the Military Tribunal at Nuremberg.

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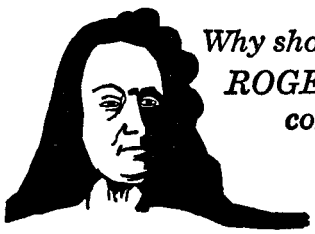

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from a sermon by Timothy Alden, first president of Allegheny College at South Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on January 4, 1801.

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things besides a judge. One of the earliest New Deal boy-wonders as Solicitor of the Department of Labor at twenty-six, he was also one of the most scintillating advocates of the Solicitor General's office before the Supreme Court until President Roosevelt, in a personal and nonpolitical appointment, made him a Federal Judge at thirty-five. Now Senior Honorary Fellow at Harvard University, he is a Past President of the Harvard Board of Overseers and a Trustee of the Ford Foundation. Despite a busy career on the bench, he has found time to teach government both at Harvard and at M.I.T., to be a copyright expert for UNESCO and a labor expert at the International Labour Office.

With such a background, reminiscent of the renaissance man, it is hardly unusual that Wyzanski has spoken and written on a variety of subjects for the past thirty years. This book is a collection of some of those speeches and articles, selected not by him but by his publisher.

Nor is it surprising that most of the pieces are about the Law or Men of the Law, for all those other facets of his career have been merely avocations. In this volume are speeches to the Bar, book reviews on legal matters or *Atlantic* pieces on ethics and the law. There are some too on education, a field in which he speaks with almost as great authority.

Perhaps because of his own limitations, this reviewer's favorites come under the heading "Judges and Judgment." The author was fortunate in having lived at the right time and in the right place to know the great American judges of his own century. Two of them, Augustus and Learned Hand of the Federal Second Circuit, he had served as law clerk. He was a young intimate of Brandeis in Washington and he also knew Holmes in the latter's final years. In fact, he ends a commencement address at Carleton College by reading a poetic letter Holmes had written to him at the time of his own college graduation.

Holmes, on balance, is Wyzanski's hero, albeit somewhat reluctantly, because his old warrior mysticism does not meet the positive spiritual needs of the young judge. Still, as scholar, lawyer, judge, Holmes clearly approximates the exacting standards of Wyzanski better than does anyone else. Perhaps the best single piece in the volume is on "The Democracy of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes," given in 1950 as the Marshall Woods Lecture. His two articles on the trial judge are revealing in the self-restraint and limitations he feels the judge should place on himself. (It is only fair to remark that a number of members of the Massachusetts Bar have sometimes felt that he has in practice transgressed these restraints!)

Under the headings "The Compass of the Law" and "A Great Public Calling" are gathered a number of pieces that discuss the developments and changes in the Constitution, the law and the lawyers. Wyzanski belongs to the dynamic school of Holmes, Brandeis and the Hands, although he is more positivist than all except Brandeis. His comments over the thirty-year period on the right of privacy, on civil rights and social legislation are always pungent, always advanced and almost always looking forward with approbation. The author does not lack the courage to take the unpopular view. His article on the "Communist Party and the Law" and his address "Sentinels and Stewards," to the governing boards of Harvard and Yale, both in the early 1950's, are far more acceptable today than they could possibly have been in the unhappy atmosphere of those days.

Nor is he afraid to admit publicly that he has been wrong, as a rereading of his two *Atlantic* articles on the Nuremberg Trial once again reminds this reader.

Unlike our British cousins, American public servants are notably inarticulate, hardly ever literary. Judges, perhaps because they have more time for the reflective life, seem to do better than politicians or administrators. There are few enough even of them. But there are Holmes, Cardozo, Frankfurter and Learned Hand. Judge Wyzanski, a generation later, deserves to be added to this list in the originality of his thought and in the excellence of his style. It is certain there is no praise that would please him more.

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The Reader Replies . . . . . .

THE READER REPLIES carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles that have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: Editor, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009. Because of space limitations we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.

—EDITOR

The Autumn issue of the SCHOLAR contains a gem in Phyllis McGinley's "The Light Side of the Moon."

HARVEY B. GROCOCK
Kensington, Connecticut

* * *

I especially liked the Symposium on Morality and Joseph Wood Krutch's IF YOU DON'T MIND MY SAYING SO in the Summer issue. Indeed, I'm delighted to hear Mr. Krutch express his mind on almost anything. I wish he'd express his mind for me on Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

AGNES HOWARTH
Springfield, Illinois

* * *

However possibly disappointing the failure of participants in your Symposium on Morality [AS: Summer, 1965] to produce any clear, simple, universally acceptable criteria by which a person might reliably measure the morality or immorality (as distinguished from legality or socio-cultural evaluation) of his thoughts and actions, they succeeded probably even beyond their intent in revealing the complexities of the subject, the essentiality—and the difficulty—of definition, and the paramount importance of point of view, determined and conditioned by individual life experience (in, of course, a particular social setting).

Varied and intellectually stimulating as were the principles and considerations mentioned, they obviously did not begin to exhaust the subject. There was discussion of the distinction —and possible conflict—between personal (individual) morality and group-accepted standards, but I did not note any reference to the fact that an act may seem right and good to two or more mutually involved individuals and still be condemned by "society" as a whole. That is, interpersonal morality (as distinguished from what is right, good or moral for one individual alone) is not always identical with group morality (or what this is professed to be).

Certainly the group moral values and principles of an individualistically oriented society must be radically different from those proclaimed by groups in which the individual has no status except in his cog-in-a-machine subordination to the group's organization and goals. Perhaps not admissible in a "scientific" discussion, but nevertheless pertinent, is the mystical concept that we individuals are really psychically inseparable, so that what we do to or for another, we do literally to or for ourselves. Acceptance of this premise, however helpful, does not guarantee, of course, certainty in every instance of what is beneficial (good) or harmful (bad) to the ourself-others continuum. As the discussants concluded, we can only do what we believe to be our best.

Dr. Henry Murray's statement, "To love somebody who is repulsive in many moral aspects . . . is beyond human capacity," is unquestionably true if the word "love" represents a feeling of attraction that includes liking, respect and congeniality. It appears, however, that there is a literal radiation of good will, an actual psychic force of power and blessing, properly called "love," that can be directed toward even the most repulsive individuals.

SIDNEY G. MORTON
Richmond, Virginia

* * *

I thought the summer issue of the SCHOLAR especially good. So much of value in it. And such a fine sketch of Marjorie Nicolson, and this comes from a chap who likes to write as well as to read PORTRAITS!

IRVING DILLIARD
Princeton University

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Dorothy B. Kerr

Bravos to Rosalie Colie for her charming and tactful PORTRAIT of Marjorie Hope Nicolson in the Summer issue. As Professor Nicolson's research assistant in Princeton and as her present collaborator in a new work yet to be published, I can vouch for the statement that "Miss Nicolson is *not* yet dead." As a matter of fact, she is so much alive and keeps me running so hard through all the local libraries that I suspect her best work is yet to come!

G. S. ROUSSEAU
Princeton University

• • •

Allow me, a high-school student, to express my appreciation of T. S. Matthews' essay, "Sir Winston Churchill," in the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. The article was articulate and well written and most interesting. Please invite Mr. Matthews to contribute others.

RICHARD POZNIAK
Hartford, Connecticut

• • •

As your records will indicate, I have been a subscriber to THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR since it began publication and have had many enjoyable hours reading the articles.

In the Autumn issue, the leading article by William Jovanovich, "On Purveying Books," is one of the most stimulating I have read on the subject, and if only a tenth of his many valuable suggestions would be put into effect, things would be much better for American publishing, American reading and American culture generally.

JOSEPH MERSAND
Jamaica, New York

• • •

I thought I was a reading person, but, after about fifty years of such a pastime, I found my mind slipping away from the printed page all too often. Then, I turned in your Autumn issue to the Comments on the SCHOLAR Symposium on Morality, and I was no longer old and tired of reading. Here were the questions involving our life, questions that are so important all else pales.

ERNESTINE W. BREHMER
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

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